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THE EVANGELICAL MISSION COVENANT OF AMERICA: BEGINNINGS

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PREFACE

This study aims to present a critical account of the origins of the Evangelical Mission Covenant of America. While several historical studies of this religious group have been made during the last thirty-five years, none have been documented though a number have been based on source material. Moreover, most of these studies have been made in the Swedish language, making them inaccessible to the non-Swedish reader. Consequently, the story of the origins of the Mission Covenant is not well known to the second, third, and fourth generation of Covenanters of Swedish descent while those outside the Covenant fellowship know little if anything of it at all. My purpose, therefore, is not only to make Covenant history adequately known to the members of that body themselves, but to make available material that may serve to put the Covenant movement into its proper place among the religious bodies of America.

At first glance it would seem that we have here merely the arrival and establishment of a Swedish religious type which adjusted itself to the conditions of the New World with little or no vital relations to contemporary American or Swedish American church life. The religious development among the newly arrived Swedish immigrants cannot be understood apart from the conditions prevailing both in Europe and America. This dissertation attempts to fill this need. The purpose has been to clarify the deep underlying causes for the dissenting movement and to trace it in broad lines to its consummation in the founding of the Mission Covenant.

This study is divided into two parts. The first deals with the Swedish religious background and sketches briefly the various pietistic movements and tendencies which characterized Sweden from the Reformation and finally led to the organization of the Swedish Mission Covenant. The second part traces the religious history of the leading Swedish Lutheran immigrant churches in America and attempts to analyze the causes for the establishments of Swedish Lutheran synods in addition to the Augustana Synod and the final

forming of the Evangelical Mission Covenant.

The sources for this dissertation are almost exclusively Swedish. With few exceptions all materials quoted have therefore required translation into the English. It has been the aim of the writer to convey as accurately as possible the meaning of the original text, even though this at times has been done at the expense of stylistic qualities. A very great debt of gratitude is due Professor William Warren Sweet for his guidance and encouragement during the preparation of this study.

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PART I. COVENANT BEGINNINGS IN SWEDEN

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SWEDEN

Under pressure of Gustavus Vasa, the king, the Riksdag of Västerås in 1527 disowned the papal authority in Sweden and established the royal prerogatives over the church.[1] After a series of ill fated attempts to return the church to the Catholic fold, Protestantism was finally firmly established as a result of the resolution adopted by the convocation at Uppsala in 1593.[2] The church now became a state church. The authority of the pope was rejected, but, organizationally the episcopate was retained. To the pastoral functions of the minister's office were added certain civic duties under the state. The country was divided into dioceses (stifts) and these into parishes (socknar or församlingar). Church membership of the population in a given parish was automatic and obligatory. Baptism and confirmation became imperative in order to enjoy the privileges of citizenship.[3]

In 1868 a new church law was promulgated by royal decree. Through this law the church attained a credal and organizational unity and conformity, but lost what still remained of its previous independence. It now became a state church, Erastian in the extreme. The king became the summus episcopus of the church and exercised absolute power in both secular and ecclesiastical af-

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[1] The most recent study of the Swedish reformation is found in Conrad Bergendoff, Olaus Petri and the Ecclesiastical Transformation in Sweden (Chicago: Macmillan Company, 1928). See also Hjalmar Holmquist, Reformationstidevarvet (1521-1611) (Svenska kyrkans historia. Utgiven av Hjalmar Holmquist och Hilding Pleijel. Tredje bandet. Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1933), pp. 148-57.

[2] Ibid., pp. 158-72. See also C. A. Cornelius, Svenska kyrkans historia efter reformationen (Uppsala: 1886), pp. 211-13.

[3] Ibid., pp. 73-76, 197-202, 239-41, 247-55. For an excellent study of this question, see Yngve Brilioth, Svensk kyrkokunskap (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1933), pp. 16-50, 112-40.

fairs. Thus the century old dream of unity in religion and unification of the external aspects of the church had been achieved at the sacrifice of individual independence.[1]

The religious atmosphere of the time was characterized by a legalistic piety cultivated under the orthodox ministry. Evangelical faith became synonymous with orthodox dogma.[2] A dutiful observance of church rules constituted the best evidence for a true Christian life. The intellectualism which characterized the theology of the orthodox period came also to characterize the life of piety in its various forms and expressions. An Old Testament spirit hovered over the thought of the day. The law of Moses had become a part of Sweden's penal code.[3] The Jewish retribution theory prevailed in both secular and ecclesiastical jurisprudence. It was believed that if punishment was not exacted for violations of the law, one would be exposed to the wrath and visitation of God. Thus the church held an exalted and exaggerated opinion regarding the ability of laws and legal provisions to create a Christian church life. As a result of this legalistic attitude, Christian life quickly lost its warm inner compulsion and sank to a low spiritual level. The institution rather than the individual became the primary concern. It became a custom and a tradition to go

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[1]The Lutheran faith of the Church of Sweden was reaffirmed by the renewed acceptance of the Scriptures, the three chief creeds --the Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian, as well as the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Several progressive measures were initiated shortly after the promulgation of this law: A new Catechism was authorized in 1689 which was to be used for more than a century. A new Handbook, published in 1693, combined a monumental expression of the sturdy temper of the Old Testament with a nationalist-tinged demand for righteousness in conjunction with the Lutheran devotion. A new Psalmbook was compiled in 1695. These books were to exercise a tremendous influence in the country for a century. In addition to these measures, a new Bible revision was authorized and completed in 1703, and remained in use for more than two hundred years. See Hilding Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, 1680-1772. Karolinsk kyrkofromhet. Femte bandet (Svenska kyrkans historia. Utgiven av Hjalmar Holmquist och Hilding Pleijel [Stockholm: Svenska Diakonistyrelses Förlag, 1935]), pp. 20-43. This work will hereafter be cited Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism.

[2]Ibid., p. 137.

[3]Emanuel Linderholm, Sven Rosen och hans insats i frihetstidens radikala pietism (Uppsala: Almquist och Wicksells Boktryckeri A. B., 1911), p. 63. See note 4.

en masse to religious feasts without exercising individual judgment and to participate in the Holy Communion service without thought of any spiritual preparation. The sermon aimed to raise the general morale of the people rather than to give direction to the individual in his religious questions and problems.[1]

Side by side with this institutional piety, there was also noticeable a quiet stream of personal practical piety. A churchman such as Archbishop Haquin Spegel held that two things were necessary to a Christian life: a correct faith and a circumspect life. This Lutheran-oriented piety was represented by both clergy and laymen who faithfully shared in public religious worship, but who also sought sustenance for their personal spiritual life in the written works of such pious men as Johann Arndt, Christian Scriver and Martin Luther. Some of these writers, whose views reflected a German, mystical-practical, pietistic tendency, had been translated into Swedish. Arndt's "True Christianity" was to exercise a particularly great influence on pietistic thought in Sweden.[2]

As early as the middle of the seventeenth century, we find a number of churchmen reacting against the zeal of external orthodoxy and cold legalism, demanding a more practical and spiritual life. These impulses can first be traced to Puritanism in England, but were introduced into Sweden via Germany.[3] In Sweden, Olof Ekman, a minister in Falun, wrote a pamphlet entitled Sionödslöfte[4] in which he diagnosed the reason for the spiritual decline within

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[1] Ibid., pp. 63-70.

[2] Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 139-40. Arndt's piety was colored by Saint Bernard's mysticism. Despite this fact, his books were considered to carry the Lutheran spirit, and, though opposed in certain quarters, came to be looked upon as evangelical and orthodox.

[3] One of the men thus to influence Swedish theological thought was Theophil Grossebauer of Rostock. Influenced by the Puritans, he had written "Wächterstimme aus dem Verwusteten Zion" in 1661. Ibid., p. 145.

[4] Ibid., pp. 145-48. See also Linderholm, op. cit., pp. 75-81, for a basic discussion of these men. Boëthius' attack against the decree of 1686 cost him his liberty. He was arrested and sentenced to death, his sentence, however, being commuted to life imprisonment. Freed after a few years, he continued in a more subdued manner his criticism of the spiritual condition of the church.

the church. Said he: "The poor sheep do not know what constitutes their Christianity or how they should exercise their Christianity in true godliness." But Ekman demanded more than a reform in the spiritual condition of the church. He also urged that laymen be permitted to participate in the activities of the church and that a special council, in addition to the clergy, deal with disciplinary matters. He insisted that schools for children be established in conjunction with the church, where boys and girls be taught the rudiments of Christianity, and where their physical needs could be cared for by a "faithful old woman or deaconess." These were unprecedented demands. Ekman was joined by another clergyman, Daniel Anander, whose efforts constitute additional evidence of the attempts at reform which had begun to stir within the church. Still more outspoken in his demands for spiritual freedom and independence in the church was Jacob Boëthius, the gifted and learned dean of the parish of Mora. He attacked the royal decree of absolutism of 1686 and advocated separation of church and state.[1]

The foremost place among the reform-demanding churchmen, however, must be assigned to Jesper Swedberg, bishop of Skara. Swedberg personified the old church tradition, whose outlook was rooted in a literal Biblicism. He gave little attention to theoretic questions and preferred to deal with the practical application of Christianity to Christian living. He represented a Pietism which demanded an individual religiousness or a personal experience. This demand led him to a pointed criticism of the intellectual legalism of the church.[2]

It is clear that these friends of reform within the church were familiar with the reform program initiated in Germany under Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705). Spener had been influenced largely by the writings of Arndt and especially by his celebrated book "True Christianity." His pietism first showed its influence

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[1] Ibid., pp. 139-40.

[2] Swedberg, churchman, soldier, poet, and writer is of special interest to us because of the role he played in connection with religious work in the Swedish colony in Delaware, over which, by royal request, he exercised oversight. See Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 25, 41, 125, 129, 133, 152-56.

in private devotional and discussion meetings--the so-called "collegia Pietatis"--of like-minded individuals who were dissatisfied with the spiritual condition of the church. His pietistic movement was to receive a special impetus when August Francke, professor and pastor at Halle, became its active proponent. The Pietism of Halle aimed at three things: the regeneration of theology by a return to the Holy Scriptures, the reformation of morals, and the restoration of the church to its primitive Christianity.[1]

German Pietism was known in Sweden as early as 1677. Spener himself corresponded with Ulrika Eleonora, the Swedish Queen. In 1688 he presented her with his Die evangelische Glaubenslehre.[2] During the succeeding years, he supplied the Queen with information about his own work and its expanding influence. It is unknown to what extent he was able to influence the pious Queen with his teaching, but, certainly, his close association had much to do with the acceptance of his teaching among the prosperous citizenry. Moreover, in addition to Spener's personal contact with Sweden, men such as Urban Hjärne, the famous physician, and his friend, Erik Odhelius, later knighted Odelstierna, had come into contact with Halle and were favorably impressed. It may also be said that the theological faculty of the University of Uppsala was, for the most part, sympathetic.[3] Thus, Pietism was at first received rather favorably in Sweden.

The greatest impetus to Pietism in Sweden, however, came at the turn of the century through the instrumentality of Swedish and Finnish students from the continental universities, especially

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[1] Ibid. See also A. Dorner, History of Protestant Theology. Trans. by George Robson and Sophia Taylor (Edinburg: T. and T. Clark, 1871), II, 203-27.

[2] In ~~1688~~ Spener was called to the vacant pastorate of the German church in Stockholm, but declined. See O. Malmström "Speners brev till Ulrika Eleonora" in "Meddelanden," Kyrkohistorisk Arsskrift, Utgiven av Herman Lundström (Uppsala: Almquist och Wicksells Boktryckeri A. B., 1913), XIII, 13 ff.

[3] One of the professors, Dániel Djurberg, found in Spener a kindred spiritual soul, and in him Pietism was to have a conciliatory and understanding friend for a generation. Professor Johan Palmroot and Lars Molin, dean of the Uppsala Cathedral, were equally sympathetic. See Linderholm, op. cit., p. 91; also Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, p. 160.

from the University of Halle. No less than thirteen Swedish and Finnish students matriculated there in the opening years of the University (1693-1694).[1] In due time, many of these and others that followed came to occupy places of responsibility in their homeland. Stockholm constituted the main center of the pietistic activities, though Karlskrona in the south and Umeå in the north were centers of similar activity.

The pietistic movement was also aided greatly by the return of Swedish prisoners of war, taken in the unsuccessful Russian campaign of 1709. These prisoners had been ministered to by a number of men of pietistic leanings. Francke himself had done much to soften their hardships. By his aid, a school founded on his own pedagogical principles had been established among the internes at Tobolsk. When the surviving captives returned in 1722-24, they brought pietistic convictions home with them.[2]

As elsewhere, the Swedish pietistic movement was characterized by a tendency to meet in small groups or conventicles for devotional purposes--devotions which were concerned largely with the reading and exposition of the Scriptures. It was also usually characterized by a critical attitude toward life, a dissenting and often schismatic attitude toward the church and state, and a legalism which its adherents desired to impose on others. It insisted on repentance and conversion as expressive of spiritual experience; it also stressed the deeper life. It may largely be thought of as a reform movement reacting against the dead orthodoxy of the church. And as such it was favored by a great number of the leading clergy and laity and spread rapidly over Sweden,[3]

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[1] J. S. Pajula, "Svenska och finska studerande vid universitetet i Halle, 1693-1744," Historisk Tidskrift, 1896, p. 334. Pajula's treatment, however, is said to be incomplete in the statistical facts.

[2] Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, op. cit., pp. 206-26. This study gives a detailed account of the treatment of the Swedish prisoners of war in Russia.

[3] Hilding Pleijel, Herrnhutism i Sydsverige (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1925), pp. 7-10. Among its strongest proponents were such clergymen as Andreas Hillestrőm in Karlskrona, Eric Tollstadius in Stockholm, and Nils Grubb in Umeå. Linderholm, op. cit., p. 102, treats of Tollstadius. For a full discussion of Nils Grubb, see Edward Wermzrants, "Prosten i Umeå Nils Grubbs liv och verksamhet"(1681-1724) Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, 1903-1906.

resulting in a revival led by a group of uneducated lay people.[1]

It would almost seem that the old form of orthodoxy had spent its force by the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and that under the ascendant tide of Pietism a new religious form had been created. The theological trend had shifted from Christus pro nobis to Christus in nobis. In view of these facts, it is understandable that the orthodox clergy followed with increasing apprehension the rapid growth of this movement, prepared to apply coercion, if necessary, to hinder it. By their efforts, several edicts had already been enacted, intended to check or suppress all conventicles. By the year 1726, the church renewed her attempt to suppress the liberal movements.

For political reasons her effort was now aided by Anders Horn, the autocratic chancellor of the land, who helped bring about the passage of the famous Conventicle Law of 1726.[2] This measure was chiefly aimed at house gatherings where texts were read and expounded and pietistic excesses were encouraged. This law, providing for heavy fines, imprisonment, and banishment for any violation, was to remain on the statute books for more than a century. Its enactment almost sounded the death knell for Pietism in Sweden, and marked the end of the struggle between orthodoxy and conservative Pietism. But its promulgation also marked the beginning of new dissenting movements within the Church of Sweden.

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[1]The movement produced an unauthorized hymnal, compiled and printed without the permission of the consistory, but passed by the censor librorum, Johan Upmarck-Rosenadler. It was entitled, Mose, Guds tjänares, sång och Lamsens sång "The Song of God's Servant Moses and the Song of the Lamb," reflecting the personal and mystical elements of religion. See Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 192-201.

[2]Ibid., pp. 295-310.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SWEDEN

In the subsequent years, the church found herself engaged in a struggle with the rising tide of a radical pietistic movement, introduced through the teaching of Gottfrid Arnold[1] and Johann Conrad Dippel.[2] By 1697 Arnold had converted Dippel, a gifted, ambitious, restless adventurer and mystic, to his own mystical teaching of the "inner word," which came to be designated as the source of all religious knowledge and the norm of all Christian living. Dippel advanced the view of the "inner word" or the "inner light" in a manner which denied the absolute authority of the Scriptures, the value of the sacraments, and the legitimacy of the ministry. On a visit to Sweden in 1727 he was able to win a number of the clergy to his side. By the time he was ordered deported, he had succeeded in circulating his writings in which he asserted that he had overthrown the Lutheran church and broken with the fundamental principles of Protestantism.

Another movement closely akin to the radical wing of Pietism in the first half of the eighteenth century was the mystical apocalyptic or millennialist sect called the Gray Jackets, Gråkoltar,[3] so named after the jackets worn by its members. Believing that the Day of Judgment was imminent, these people detached themselves from society and in an attitude of prayer awaited the Great Judge. Their most prominent apologists were two students, Eric Molin and Sven Rosen, both exceptionally gifted and devoted and both converts to radical Pietism.[4] They were great admirers of

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[1]For a study of Gottfrid Arnold see E. Seeberg, Gottfrid Arnold, die Wissenschaft und die Mystik seiner Zeit (1923).

[2]Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 287-88, 314-24. Pleijel bases his study largely on K. Henning, J. C. Dippels vistelse i Sverige samt dippelismen i Stockholm, 1721-1741 (1881).

[3]Linderholm, op. cit., pp. 204 ff. and Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 324-39.

[4]Ibid. See also Linderholm, loc. cit.

Eric Tollstadius, the prominent Stockholm clergyman who had been a conservative Pietist, but was later accused by the consistory of Stockholm of entertaining sympathies for Dippelism.[1] Linderholm describes Rosen as "one of the noblest and purest characters in the Swedish religious life,"[2] and "the Francke of Sweden."

More important to the religious life of Sweden than the Gray Jackets was the virile movement of the Moravian Brethren, best known in Sweden as Herrnhutism. Its patron was Nicholaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), a Saxon nobleman and a religious and social reformer, who had received his education at Halle. The legalistic spirit and strict observance of the Pietism at Halle did not in the long run fit in with his lively temperament and strong evangelical conviction. Opposed to religious scholasticism, he established his views on what he called a Herzenstheologie, or theology of the heart.[3]

In 1723 Zinzendorf permitted a group of Moravian exiles to settle on his estate and found the religious community of Herrnhut. One of his co-workers was Carl Henrik von Grundelstierna, a young Swedish nobleman. Through Grundelstierna's activities, Herrnhutism was introduced into Sweden;[4] and through them, Zinzendorf came into contact with several clergymen of pietistic leanings. Later, diaspora workers were sent to Sweden to preach Zinzendorf's Herzenstheologie. Then, in 1735 Zinzendorf himself visited Sweden. His visit, however, met much opposition and an order for his deportation was issued. Before an opportunity was given to serve the order, Zinzendorf had already departed.[5]

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[1]Linderholm, ibid, pp. 119-120. [2]Ibid., p. 140.

[3]For a full discussion of Herrnhutism in Sweden, see Nils Jacobson, "Från en forskningsresa till Herrnhut. Nya bidrag till den svenska herrnhutismens uppkomst," Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, 1903, pp. 5-92. See also Pleijel, Herrnhutism i Sydsverige, pp. 48 ff.

[4]Jacobson, op. cit., p. 13. Jacobson who has had access to the sources at Herrnhut states that Grundelstierna assisted Zinzendorf in the founding of the colony and that he was present at its dedication.

[5]Ibid., pp. 5-92. Also Pleijel, Herrnhutism i Sverige, pp. 48-65. It was the Swedish minister at Copenhagen that notified the Swedish government of Zinzendorf's intended visit to Sweden. Upon his return to Germany, Zinzendorf wrote an apologetic message to the Swedish king, in which he stated his opposition both to the

For a number of years Sweden proved a difficult field for Herrnhutistic teaching. When the upsurge finally came, about 1740, the movement was in the hands of Thore Odhelius[1] and Arvid Gradin,[2] both theologians and clergymen, and the itinerant worker, Elias Östergren.[3] By mid-century the work had progressed to such an extent that four churches or associations had been founded in various parts of the country. The movement only partly succeeded in overcoming the suspicions of the church leaders that it was schismatic and antagonistic to the Established Church. On the whole, the Herrnhutistic movement in Sweden was a wholesome antidote to the fanatical and mystical doctrines of the day. However, for a time, due to an internal crisis within the movement itself, it shared in many of the excesses of contemporary religious movements. The Blut-und Wunden-Theologie became a popularized description of the suffering Savior, and degenerated finally into the most exaggerated conceptions and the most sensuous, puerile, and objectionable phraseology.[4] In the sixties, however, Herrnhutism recovered and continued to the end of the century to be a rallying point for those who could not find the spiritual condition of the church conducive to a warm spiritual life. During the first decades of the nineteenth century it was exposed to the great polemics of Henrik Schartau, at which time it ceased to be of any direct influence in the country at large. In Stockholm it maintained a condiderable strength during the first quarter of the century until it came into competition with virile English Methodism and lost its identity.[5]

The various revivals which broke out intermittently, especially in the rural districts, may be characterized as spontaneous folk movements. They were partly due to the remaining vestiges

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conservative-legal Pietism and to radical mysticism.

[1] Jacobson, op. cit., pp. 103 ff.

[2] Pleijel, op. cit., pp. 59-65, 73-83, 87 ff.

[3] Ibid., pp. 421-50.

[4] Ibid., pp. 450-58.

[5] Gunnar Westin, George Scott och hans verksamhet i Sverige, 2 vols. (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1929), I, 20-21. Hereafter this work will be cited Westin, George Scott.

of pietistic or Herrnhutistic ideas and partly to the revival of Pietistic orthodoxy within the church.[1] These movements undoubtedly influenced the moral and spiritual life of Sweden. While the forms of orthodoxy of the church remained as before, life itself had been touched. In many instances the clergy was awakened to its responsibility and began to stress such external matters as Sabbath observance and the practice of confirmation.

The attack upon the dead forms of orthodoxy, the reactionary attitude of the church, and the spirit of intolerance did not all come from the pietistic movements. There was the challenge presented by the religious speculations of Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), who combined the speculative and the practical, the visionary and the materialistic.[2] Moreover, the contemporaneous cultural movement known as the "Enlightenment" also challenged the validity of the existing order, changed the religious outlook, liberated man from the old authorities, and permitted him to order his life and faith in accordance with the dictates of reason. Freedom of conscience and religious toleration became the motto of the age. Truth was to be the ultimate goal and reason was the only way of approach.

The church was fully aware of the consequences of this rationalistic philosophy which enthroned deism and atheism. To overcome these enemies of religion, the clergy was instructed to exert all its power to win the confidence, esteem, and love of the rationalists. However, the clergy itself would hardly have been expected to remain immune to the influences of the new spirit. The result was a new development in religious thinking known as "neology." Neology did not oppose the old orthodox doctrines; it merely ignored them as being antiquated. Like the Scottish moderates of the eighteenth century, they "let sleeping dogmas lie." Sermons became polished discourses on the "Highest Being" and virtue became synonymous with happiness. It was a religion of en-

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[1] Ibid.

[2] M. Lamm, Emmanuel Swedenborg, En Studie öfver hans utveckling till mystiker och andeskådare (Stockholm, 1915). This work is probably the most exhaustive on the subject in Swedish. Pleijel in Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 504-13, states the possibility that the influence of radical Pietism through Dippel as well as Herrnhutism might have had much to do with the formulating of Swedenborg's theological system.

lightenment which rejected all in the Christian faith which could not be rationally explained and demonstrated. It ventured to make philosophical truth as self-evident and incontrovertible as mathematics. In the theological realm it claimed that either the Christian doctrines are capable of demonstration or they are unworthy of belief. Needless to say, this teaching threatened the very principles of Christianity.

In the midst of this spiritual eclipse in Sweden, a number of prominent clergy attempted to stem the tide by utilizing the impulses of the Enlightenment and especially of German idealism through the adoption of an aesthetic-religious education. Standards of clerical education were raised and philosophy was given a more prominent place in the university curricula. The press became concerned with religious-philosophical problems and debated and disputed about the general theological literature. Polite letters moved in a religious atmosphere and philosophers sought enthusiastically to give a tenable solution to the problem of faith and knowledge. Attempts were made to give Christianity a more important role in the national consciousness--which naturally demanded for its realization a wider horizon of religious understanding and orientation than was to be found within the framework of strict dogmatism. The whole culture partook of a mild neology-colored gospel, mingled with German higher criticism.[1]

Simultaneously with these efforts by the more liberal leaders of the church, a number of clergy performed an effectual ministry not only for the preservation of orthodoxy but also in keeping the spiritual torch aflame. Some of these clergymen were really Pietists at heart and the various religious movements which were thus initiated all, to a greater or less degree, partook of an evangelical spirit.[2] An attempt was also made to return to the Lutheran doctrine regarding the Word and justification by faith, individually appropriated. It was an attempt at a restoration

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[1]Gustaf Brandt, "Carl Olof Rosenius. Ur ett utkast till en Rosenii-biografi," Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, XV (1914-1915). This article will hereafter be cited, Gustaf Brandt, "Ur ett utkast." Cf. Sven Lodin, Carl Olof Rosenius. Hans liv och förkunnelse (Stockholm: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Bokförlag, 1922), p. 7. This work will be referred to as Sven Lodin, Carl Olof Rosenius. Hans liv. The church leaders in this movement were J. O. Wallin, F. M. Franzen, and E. G. Geijer.

[2]Eric Tollstadius, Peter Murbeck, Anders Elving and Anders

of the church as a congregatio sanctorum. This restoration on the basis of Biblical confessionalism became a generally accepted idea, and the watchword became "Back to Luther." In reality this rebirth within the church and back-to-Luther movement was to come through Pietism. Foremost among its proponents was Henrik Schartau, curate at the Cathedral at Lund.

Nohrborg were Pietists. Anders Nohrborg was the author of "Way for Salvation for Fallen Man," a volume treasured in pious Swedish homes a century after his death. See Pleijel, Pietism och Herrnhutism, pp. 513-20. Among the clergy of a clearly Herrnhutistic tendency were Andreas Tengbom, Olof Kolmodin, Thore Odhelius, and A. C. Rutström. The latter was exiled during the years 1765-70 as a result of his religious and political views. Soon after his return to Sweden he died. Ibid., pp. 376-77, 436-49, 479-86, 517-18.

CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS DURING THE FIRST PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Henrik Schartau had been influenced in his early years by Herrnhutism, but after his ordination he turned his back upon Herrnhutistic teaching and spoke of it as heresy.[1] He believed in a genuine conversion, repentance, faith, and sanctification. In his soteriology he worked out a system of gradual steps, "the order of grace" (nådesordningen), leading to salvation. Schartau was to become famous not only for his unqualified appeal to the Word of God, his insistence upon a genuine personal conversion experience and progression in the life of faith, and his dogmatizing schematic sermons, but also for his strict confessional and other high-church proclivities. Through the preaching of Schartau and others of his type, local revivals of a spontaneous nature sprang up in various communities in south and central Sweden. Among the leaders in these revivals were Lars Linderoth (1761-1811), a revivalist and hymn writer, Per Tolleson (1747-1827) in the archdiocese of Uppsala, Peter L. Sellergren and Per Nyman, great preachers and writers, and Jacob Otto Hoof, a great expounder of the law.[2]

Simultaneously with the revival of the pietistic movement in southern and central Sweden, the northland also gave rise to a popular pietistic development called the Readers (Läsare). They became known as the Norrland Readers (Norrlandsläsare),[3] and de-

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[1] P. Rydholm, "Henrik Schartau," Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, IX (1907-08); see also the study by Emil Berglund, Henric Schartau och Carl Olof Rosenius (Uppsala: Sveriges Kristliga Studentrörelses Förlag, 1914).

[2] Cornelius, op. cit., pp. 309-35.

[3] Ekman, Den inre missionshistorien, pp. 244 ff. Cf. Bror Alstermark, De religiöst-svärmiska rörelserna i Norrland, 1750-1800 (Strängnäs: Wästerlundska Boktryckeriet, 1809).

veloped into two main branches, one maintaining high-church attitudes (the Old Readers) the other of pronounced antinomian tendencies in addition to its opposition to the Established Church (the New Readers). In its early phase the Old Reader movement was favored by the clergy, which sought to compensate the long distances to the churches by permitting small conventicles in the various villages, where some layman, in the absence of a clergyman, read the Bible, the works of Luther and the Postil of Anders Nohrborg, entitled "The Way of Salvation for Fallen Man," an exposition of Luther's doctrines. It was characterized by its adherance to "pure doctrine" and by its exacting legalism and extreme biblicism. As a movement it failed to reach the inner life of the people and developed merely into a pietistic churchliness. As such it ceased to exercise any influence by the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century.

The New Readers came into existence partly as an answer to a great spiritual hunger among the masses. The old orthodoxy and the pure doctrine with its legalistic emphasis had been unable to inspire the individual to a personal acceptance of Christ. And the rationalism of the past century with its vitiated message had increased the hunger for something spiritually satisfying. During the first three decades of the nineteenth century there had also been a great circulation and distribution of Bibles and religious tracts which brought to many a realization of the need of a new life, a life based on a spiritual liberation.[1]

The new movement had its inception in Piteå, in the first decade of the nineteenth century. According to its teaching, the legalistic Pietism of the Old Readers, which had demanded a deep-going repentance, with an implied warning not to accept or appropriate the forgiveness of sins too quickly, constituted as much of a hindrance for receiving the grace of God as revealed in Christ as did the vitiated message of the orthodox group. Despite their rallying cry, "back to Luther," orthodoxy had failed to comprehend the central teaching in Luther's doctrine and was not willing to experience his justification by faith. The movement of the New Readers partook of the tendencies and ideas of Herrnhutistic teaching and fervor. Its adherents came together in small groups or

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[1]Brandt, "Ur ett utkast. . . . ." p. 343.

conventicles to read the works of Luther and Nohrborg for mutual edification. Among these evangelical pioneers were not only a great number of laymen but also several clergymen who were sympathetic to the movement. The New Readers spread rapidly over northern Sweden. They were not to continue, however, without intervention from the clergy and the church. The church was alarmed by the reports it received from its clergy who, in the words of Westin, "revealed a sorrowful lack of understanding of the characteristics of the pietistic life."[1] Some of the clergy wrote that "the writings of Luther are very inappropriate both for the ignorant and for the ones inclined to enthusiastic schemes."[2] Thereupon followed a period of visitations by bishops, priests, and marshals, with the result that a psychological state of martyrdom was created among the New Readers who felt themselves persecuted for the sake of Christ. The adherents of the movement then retaliated by denouncing the clergy of the church as false prophets, opposing the Prayer Book and the Catechism, and pressing their doctrine of justification by faith to an antinomian degree.[3] By the fall of 1819, a royal commission, headed by Josua Sylvander, Minister of Justice, was sent to investigate. Sylvander himself was in no small measure influenced by Herrnhutism. Because of his conciliatory policy and his sympathy for free religious movements, he was able to accomplish more than had the former visitants. His report is interesting:

> In the northern regions the name läsare as used by the honest man does not mean anything other than that he to whom this name is applied is awakened to concern for his salvation . . . . .I have received from dependable judges of that area the testimony regarding them that they are the most upright and virtuous people of that neighborhood.[4]

The great scholar, Samuel Ödman, said that they separated themselves from all ungodly associations, eagerly read the word of

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[1] Westin, op. cit., pp. 31-33, 38.

[2] See letter by Isaak Grape in "Meddelanden och Aktstycken," Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, IX, 299-304. Grape was a clergyman in Skellefteå and wrote to Bishop E. A. Almquist in Härnösand. See also Westin, op. cit., p. 38, note 1.

[3] Ibid., p. 38.

[4] C. W. Skarstedt, Handbok i Sveriges Kyrkohistoria (Stockholm: P. A. Huldbergs Bokhandel, 1886), p. 242.

God and "were the most diligent auditors and the most devout communicants."[1]

In some communities the movement gradually degenerated into fanaticism, but in others it survived all attempts at suppression and by the year 1848 even began to administer the sacraments outside of the Established Church.[2] In that sense it is a precursor of other dissenting movements.

Allied to these movements and existing almost simultaneously was the one led by Lars Levi Laestadius (1800-1881). Laestadius was an eminent botanist and clergyman who labored among the Lapps of northern Sweden. Because of the vice prevalent among the people of his province, Laestadius preached the law rather than the gospel, demanded confession of sin, and in a measure used absolution and excommunication. His preaching was accompanied by strange manifestations in the converts--convulsive movements of the body and loud cries and groans. The movement spread largely among the Lapps and the Finns, as well as among the Norwegians.[3]

Still another movement of pietistic character was initiated in the Northland during the decades from 1830-1850 under the leadership of Eric Jansson (1808-1850). At the outset Jansson and his followers were true Readers--followers of Luther, Arndt and Nohrborg. Finally, however, Jansson proclaimed himself as the only "true" preacher since the days of the Apostles. This pronouncement led to tremendous opposition, with the result that Jansson and his followers migrated to the United States in 1845-1846. Here they founded a colony named Bishops Hill in Illinois.[4]

An event which brings us closer to the chief aim of this thesis was the introduction of Methodism into Sweden in 1826.[5]

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[1] Ibid. See also Westin, George Scott, pp. 33-41.

[2] Westin, op. cit., pp. 38-40.

[3] Ekman, pp. 279-311. From their manifestations the followers of Laestadius became known as Criers (Ropare). The same manifestations occurred in central Sweden. See David Nyvall, Min faders testamente (Chicago: Scandia Printing Company, 1924).

[4] See infra, p. 64.

[5] Sweden had had some contacts with the English Methodist through Carl Magnus von Wrangel, Provost of the Swedish churches in Delaware. When Wrangel returned to Sweden in 1768, he went by way of England, where he met John Wesley. It appears that the two

This was due to the activities of Samuel Owen, "the father of the Swedish merchant marine." Owen, an Englishman, had become impressed by Methodism and had persuaded the Wesleyan committee in London of the desirability of having a representative in Sweden to minister to the English nationals in the capital.[1] As a result J. R. Stephens, son of a prominent minister in England, arrived in Sweden as pastor of the English people in Stockholm. This step, says Westin, "signified that our Lutheran land had been brought within the missionary circle of the Methodist church, whose world-wide expansion was to become so strong during the subsequent decades."[2] Recognized as the English legation pastor, the gifted and educated Stephens moved in the circles of higher society and through these contacts won many hearers for his services. By 1829 he had greatly expanded his field of labor, although this was contrary to Swedish law. As a direct result of his increased activities, the group of Herrnhutistic followers in Stockholm was won over to the new movement and their chapel was closed.[3] Stephen himself believed that a revival within the state church was possible. Said he: "A revival will commence in the bosom of the church itself, led by its own ministry and spreading among its own members."[4] In spite of all his attempts, however, his work in Sweden was not

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became fast friends. Upon his return to Sweden where he became pastor at the royal court, von Wrangel sought to realize some of the ideas he had received in England. The Society Pro Fide et christianismo, founded in 1771, was the immediate result. It was patterned after the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," founded three-quarters of a century earlier. John Wesley was elected "corresponding member" of the Swedish society in the year of its founding. See Axel Anderson, Svenska Missionsförbundet. Dess uppkomst och femtioåriga verksamhet (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Bokförlag, 1928), pp. 9-10. Title abbreviated to read, Svenska Missionsförbundet In re missionen,Vol. I.

[1]By the Act of 1741 the "English and the Reformed" who had settled in Sweden were permitted to have their own places and forms of worship in any of the coast cities, except Karlskrona. Westin, op. cit., pp. 94-96. See also Hjalmar Holmquist, Tvång, Tolerans och Samverkan (Lund: Håkan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1929), pp. 117-18.

[2]Westin, op. cit., p. 98.

[3]Ibid., I, 106-07.

[4]Letter by Stephens quoted by Westin, ibid., p. 103.

successful because of the Swedish law which circumscribed its scope. In 1830 Stephens returned to England.

After Stephens' return to England, George Scott, of Edinburgh, was called as his successor. Though Scott lacked much of the polish, education, and perhaps some of the natural gifts of his predecessor, he was to prove by far the more effective and aggressive of the two. He represented the "general conversion" type of the revival movement within the Methodist milieu. He belonged to the old school whose mentality and outlook were typified by class meetings, conventicles, and cataclysmic conversion experiences. "I would willingly die endeavoring to rescue souls from the devil's grip and bring them to Jesus," was the expression of his deep passion.[1] Scott utilized every possible opportunity to win converts for his church. His attitude on this subject is revealed by the following statement: "On my first arrival I was a zealous Methodist preacher, and nothing would satisfy me but the formation of a prosperous Methodist Society."[2] In the light of available evidence, it appears that Scott originally aimed to follow in the footsteps of the great Wesley and build an organization independent of the State Church. To that end he bent every effort and utilized every opportunity.

> Whether the head of the Church will bless our instrumentality to the reviving of the National Established Church, or prepare the way for forming societies in a state of separation from it, it is not for me to determine. One or the other must ere long take place; for their is a leaven at work which cannot be unproductive. Amid all the discouragements connected with the fact that no Methodist society composed of Swedes is, or can at present be, formed, I feel assured that we are notwithstanding this, called to Sweden, and called to do a great work there; to exercise a holy reviving influence upon the religious institutions of the country; called in a word to occupy the position in which Mr. Wesley at first found himself and from it he never moved, until he was compelled by the Providence of God.[3]

Westin makes the notation that Wesley was active within his own church,--his own through education, ordination, and active

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[1] Ibid., pp. 106-13, 140. See also Ernest S. Larson, "The Life and Work of Carl Olof Rosenius." (Unpublished B. D. Thesis Chicago Theological Seminary, 1942), pp. 20-21.

[2] Ibid., p. 207. Westin quoting Scott's correspondence.

[3] Ibid., pp. 381-82.

service, a strong bond which Scott lacked in his relationship with the Swedish Church. As a foreigner he lacked every legal right to follow in the footsteps of Wesley. Nevertheless, we find the creative Scott projecting himself into a number of undertakings which were to bring him both enemies and friends. Contrary to Swedish law, he began after a year to preach in Swedish, thus making an appeal to the Swedish people. He also ingratiated himself with the leading members of such important organizations as the Evangelical Society, the Swedish Bible Society, and the temperance movement. Of still greater importance was his interest in missions. He initiated a regularly conducted mission prayer service in which he shared the platform with the leading clergy of the land. Moreover, he brought about the creation of the Swedish Mission Society on an alliance basis, with himself as foreign secretary.[1] Finally, he started no less than five Christian periodicals, two of which, Budbäraren and Stockholms Nykterhetshärold, failed at the very outset. Then in 1834 he published the Missionstidningen in the interest of missions, and in 1836, Fosterlandsvännen, both of which were successful. His last venture along this line was the Pietisten (Pietist) which was published in 1842, a few months before he was forced to leave Sweden.[2]

In the meantime he planned to make the English chapel a center for the progressive religious movement in the country. This obviously make it necessary that the project be placed within a Swedish framework. Scott usually was opposed in his undertakings by the clergy, who suspected him of schismatic intentions, and both press and consistory now combined in an organized effort to hinder the resourceful pastor. Amidst much bitter opposition Scott, however, had the satisfaction of winning the initial round over his opponents, when a royal resolution gave him permission to purchase a lot and erect a church for the maintenance of his work in the capital.[3] In this church which was dedicated about two years later, Scott had the distinction of gathering a huge crowd of Swedish Lutherans, both from the metropolis itself and from many parts of the country. Especially attracted were those

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[1] Ibid., pp. 33-360. [2] Ibid., p. 362.

[3] Ibid., pp. 440-41. The permission was celebrated "in a burst of hallowed praise."

from the north where Scott had made valuable contacts through visits and through his Mission Society. Thus Scott had successfully consummated his plan for a place that would bring together the Swedish Lutherans despite anything that the Swedish laws or the consistory of Stockholm might say.

But the animosity against Scott continued. At the Riksdag of 1840-1841, a motion was introduced which would have prohibited him from conducting public or private worship in the Swedish language. It failed to carry, through the intervention of the Bishop of Gothenburg and the Archbishop of Uppsala. But the liberal press continued its bitter attacks with the result that Scott was publicly insulted in the streets. Soon after this, Scott left Sweden for a visit to England and America to gather money for the indebtedness on the church and to solicit support for missionary activities in Sweden.[1] During his absence from Sweden, his colleague and coworker, Carl Olof Rosenius, was placed in charge of the Swedish work at the church. While in America, Scott lectured a great deal about Sweden. Excerpts from these lectures, describing Sweden in the darkest color possible, found their way back to Sweden, possibly some in their original form but others in an apocryphal version. As such they appeared in the hostile Swedish press, calculated to inflame public opinion against the missionary.[2] Needless to say, the articles, whether genuine or not, caused great excitement, and the usefulness of Scott's activities in Sweden came to an end. Upon his return to Stockholm in the fall of 1841, the opposition intensified. The liberal press challenged consistory, government, and police to remove him. He was caricatured and dramatized as a hypocritical villain in a stage play. His meetings were often disturbed by the mob; on Palm Sunday, 1842, an infuriated mob rioted both inside and outside the English church during the morning worship. By the end of May of that year, Scott was forced to abandon his Swedish work and return to England, an event which spelled the end of Methodism in Sweden for many years to come.[3]

From this brief survey we have seen a variety of streams,

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[1] Ibid., p. 605. [2] Ibid., pp. 606-08.

[3] Ibid., pp. 642-64. For a brief discussion of Scott and his work in Sweden, see Larson, op. cit., pp. 22-28.

movements, and influences running more or less parallel, all of them laying claim to a pietistic spirit, and all of them, for lack of leadership, degenerating in a greater or less degree. None of them possessed the power to expand into a great national movement. The man who was destined to gather these various groups together and to give to them a common characteristic and interest was Carl Olof Rosenius, Scott's colleague and co-worker, and the greatest lay preacher of all times in Sweden.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT AWAKENING UNDER CARL OLOF ROSENIUS

Born in Nysätra on February 3, 1816, the third of seven children, Carl Olof Rosenius came of pietistically inclined stock. His father, Anders Rosenius, was a clergyman in the Swedish State Church. A humble, conscientious, and consecrated man, his fundamental religiousness reflected an orthodox Lutheranism somewhat colored by an interest in doctrines of a pietistic and Herrnhutistic character. For more than two decades he had served as assistant and supply minister in the Established Church, until, at the age of sixty-four, he was successful in his candidacy for curate to the parish of Burträsk. It is generally conceded that his difficulty in securing advancement was due in no small measure to his pietistic leanings. It is also evident that the arbitrary treatment to which he had been exposed by those in authority in the church left an indelible impression upon him and his family and had much to do with their attitude toward the church.[1]

Carl Olof's mother, Sara Margaretha, was the daughter of Olof Norenius, an educator and minister in northern Sweden, a man richly endowed intellectually but capricious and moody temperamentally. Margaretha had inherited her father's keen intellect and penetrating judgment. Out of this hereditary background, the soul of the young Rosenius gradually took shape, for in him all the strains of his progenitors were united in a special way.[2] In-

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[1] Sven Lodin, Carl Olof Rosenius i unga år (1816-1842) Akademisk Avhandling (Stockholm: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Förlag, 1933), pp. 135-43. This title will be abbreviated to read Rosenius i unga år. It is of interest to note that Anders Rosenius was the son of a farmer in the village of Rosvik, near Forsnäs, which was a center of the new movement of Readers. This fact, no doubt, was to have great consequences for both Anders Rosenius as well as his son Carl, and hence for the great revivals in northern Sweden in the nineteenth century. While the father never officially joined the Readers, his correspondence with them gives evidence of much sympathy and understanding.

[2] Ibid., pp. 118, 130. See also Roseniusbiografien also

deed, Rosenius was more than the abundant total of the abilities and capacities of his forbears. There was a delicately adjusted balance in him between the spiritual and the intellectual. It may also be said that no son was ever surrounded with more understanding, and faith, and encouragement in the home than Carl Olof Rosenius.

The severe poverty of the Rosenius family, however, made Carl's road to learning an extremely difficult one. Along with the other children of the family, he received his early education at home and was not able to begin his formal education until the age of eleven when he was fortunate in coming under the influence of the famous pedagogue, Carl Eurenius. In 1833 the seventeen year old boy entered the Gymnasium of Härnösand where, under the guidance of a number of Sweden's most prominent educators, he made brilliant progress and achieved the highest grades in the history of the institution. A year and a half later, he entered the University of Uppsala with the intention of studying for the ministry.[1]

He had already undergone a series of religious experiences which set him apart from his fellow students. The first had occurred at the age of fifteen during his high school days at Umeå when he underwent a profoundly stirring spiritual crisis.[2] The change in Carl was soon noticed by his fellow students and exposed him to the first severe opposition of his young life. Ridiculing his new religious zeal, they dubbed him "the little reformer" and "the second Luther." Moreover, he was taunted because of his father, who had become known as " a Reader Clergyman" (Läsarepräst).[3] During this time of severe testing, the young man sought spiritual

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called C. O. Rosenius, hans liv och verksamhet (Stockholm: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Förlags-Expedition, 1868). This work is anonymous and is largely a compilation of historical facts supplied by Rosenius himself and written up by his friends, one of whom undoubtedly was Amy Moberg. It will be referred to as Roseniusbiografien.

[1]Lodin, Rosenius i unga år, pp. 168-216.

[2]Ibid., pp. 175-76. Roseniusbiografien, pp. 11-14. The latter work describes him as a seeker during his early youth. His conversion experience came to him after reading Bishop Pontopiddan's Wonderful Mirror of Faith, an analysis of the eight characteristics of the word "faith" in Scripture.

[3]Roseniusbiografien, p. 15.

comfort from a group of New Readers at Röbäck, a village near Umeå. These Readers, noted for their devotion to the writings of Luther, soon introduced young Rosenius into the Christian work. Thus we find him, a boy of fifteen or sixteen, reading and speaking in many of the conventicles, to the consternation of his classmates, who often appeared at these meetings in order to disrupt them.[1] His association with the Readers of Röbäck was to be of greatest consequences for his future development and spiritual growth. It led him to attempt similar meetings while a student at Härnösand. His attempt, however, met with vigorous disapproval among his teachers and the clergy, and with the active opposition of his fellow-students.[2] As a result he passed through spiritual struggles which drove him to solitary meditation and a renewed study of Martin Luther and Anders Nohrborg. But this time of testing proved to be for him a time of great spiritual development which deepened his own conviction of the grace of God. It imparted to him a new evangelistic note, similar to the "come as you are" doctrine of the Herrnhuters. This note was to be perceptible in his message throughout his life. By the time he had finished the gymnasium course at Härnösand in 1837, he had also engaged in preaching with the permission of the bishop of the diocese. From the very beginning he proclaimed with the gripping clearness which comes of actual experience the worthlessness of man's own deeds and virtues and the unmerited grace of God through Jesus Christ.[3]

Due to travel and a long illness, Rosenius did not matriculate at the University of Uppsala until February, 1839. Though not fully recovered from his illness, he labored with an industry that knew no lagging. He had entered the University with the ministry in view, but left without graduating. Several factors may account for this step. The precipitating causes, however, were undoubtedly his financial difficulties and declining health. On

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., pp. 18-19. See also Lodin, Rosenius i unga år, p. 218. Another excellent study on the religious experiences of Rosenius is found in Gunnar Westin, Ur den svenska folkväckelsens historia och tankevärld (Stockholm: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Förlag, 1930). Westin terms Rosenius' spiritual experience "new evangelical."

[3] Roseniusbiografien, pp. 26-27, 32-33.

the advice of his friends, he thereupon accepted a position as tutor on the estate of Länna, a short distance from Stockholm.[1]

While at Länna Rosenius came into contact with George Scott, the Methodist pastor of the English colony in Stockholm, who counseled him in an hour of mental dejection and spiritual crisis. Their acquaintance soon grew into a warm personal friendship and Rosenius became a weekly attendant at Scott's meetings. Soon we find him engaged as a co-worker with the energetic legation pastor, who contrary to Swedish law, was successfully gathering great numbers of Swedish Lutherans to his church in the capital. As stated, his plan was undoubtedly to make the English church a center of the free religious movement of Sweden. This obviously necessitated that the project be placed within a Swedish framework. To that end he was pleased with the aid given him by Rosenius of whom he spoke as "one who really is placed in my way by a God of Love."[2]

It was at this juncture that Rosenius decided to renounce further study for the ministry and become officially associated with Scott. Several basic factors determined his decision. He remembered his father's unhappy experience as a clergyman in the Established Church. Moreover, he realized that as a clergyman his field of endeavor would be limited to his parish. Said he:

> As soon as I am ordained, I am confined to the parish where I am appointed curate, the staple of my neck-chain is driven into the parish wall and beyond my chain I cannot go.[3]

But it must also be said that Rosenius recognized the need for a new evangelical movement, a need engendered by the cold and calloused spiritual condition of the Established Church. We also know that he was greatly impressed by Scott's plan to make the English church a center of the new movement; nor is evidence lacking that Rosenius felt an inner call to become the leader of such a movement. True, he would have found it impossible, according

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[1] Ibid., pp. 18, 37, 38, 47. See also Lodin, Rosenius i unga år. Lodin states that Rosenius felt an increasing aversion to the studies of secular subjects. This feeling was to be accentuated by the unsympathetic attitude of one of his teachers, a Dr. C. A. Fahlcrantz, a bitter opponent of Pietism. Moreover, the influence of Strauss' Leben Jesus was beginning to sweep over the University, through the favorable attitude of Eric Gustaf Geijer.

[2] Westin, George Scott, p. 542, note 155.

[3] Ibid., p. 540, see note 148.

to his own statement, to found a new denomination or free church on the basis of Methodism, though he found the method of work as practiced within Methodism more attractive and useful than the practice within the National Church. Continually he emphasized that the Lutheran church was in possession of the greater inheritance.[1] This church he desired to serve, though for practical purposes it must be in collaboration with Christians outside of it. The conception justifying coöperation with Christians outside the ecclesiastical framework and independent of its jurisdiction obviously had its foreshadowings in the West and found expression in colporteur work, the distribution of revival literature, and the building of small independent churches. Its organic expression under Rosenius in Sweden was to be the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation, an organization within the framework of the Established Church, yet independent of it.

Thus we find Rosenius engaged as Scott's assistant in the fall of 1840. Each Saturday afternoon he conducted Bible studies in the Book of Romans. During Scott's American tour, he was in charge of all the Swedish services, preaching to the huge audiences that filled the English church. Though the procedure was undeniably "irregular," the chairman of the Stockholm consistory reported to that body that he found Rosenius to be "a man of excellent character and a true Christian in whom one could have complete confidence."[2]

While in America, Scott secured an appropriation from the Foreign Evangelical Society in New York for the support of Rosenius as a "city missionary" in Stockholm. He also received permission to make him associate editor of his new Christian periodical, the Pietist (Pietisten), which was later to have such immense influence through all Scandinavia and among the Swedish people in America. Thus, we find Rosenius now engaged in the service of an American Missionary Society, an arrangement which made him independent of

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[1]Brandt, "Ur ett utkast," p. 372. Said Rosenius: "I feel in truth that the Lutheran church is the most orthodox in the world, yes, the only orthodox." Close coöperation with the Methodists, however, became easier because Scott had found it to his advantage to modify his own Methodist views making less of purely sectarian aspects and concentrating on the more general evangelistic task.

[2]Westin, George Scott, p. 627.

the ordination and service of the Established Church--, indeed, an entirely new course from the one originally planned. In view of this arrangement, the new Swedish Pietism and evangelism came in a large measure to stand independent in its relationship to the Swedish Church, thus forming a free, active factor in the religious life of Sweden.[1] Because of the confessional soundness of Rosenius, it was also to remain soundly and inflexibly Lutheran in its doctrinal tenets.

As has been stated, shortly after his return to Sweden, Scott was forced to abandon his Swedish work and return to England in the spring of 1842, an event which spelled the end of Methodism in Sweden for many years to come. The English church was closed and the promising work received a terrific blow. Amid much difficulty and anxiety, Rosenius sought to revive the work. In doing so he followed a slightly different pattern.[2] Known as a Bible expositor of note, he soon had a large following. The Pietist,[3] of which he was now the sole editor, grew vastly in circulation and influence; by 1851 it appeared in both Danish and Norwegian. Through numerous preaching itineraries and prodigious writings, Rosenius won an ever increasing influence throughout the nation. Soon he had to call on others to aid him in the expanding work. For several years he conducted his meetings in a large auditorium in the capital. When these quarters no longer could hold the masses of people that crowded to hear his sermons, the English church was purchased and, by 1857, it became the center of his work under its new name, the Bethlehem Church.

His work was not to progress without violent opposition and vitriolic attacks by many of the leaders within the Established Church, especially through the religious journal, Nordisk Kyrkotidning, as well as by propaganda in the daily press. Rosenius by nature disliked polemics and answered only after much persuasion by his friends, and then not through his own organ, the

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[1]It appears that Rosenius was well satisfied with this arrangement, as it gave him not only economic security but also a "call," without which as a Lutheran he did not desire to preach.

[2]Westin, George Scott, pp. 627-30.

[3]Ibid. The Pietist was published in the interest of all evangelical elements and especially because of the intense opposition carried on by the Nordisk Kyrkotidning.

Pietist, but through a supplemental column of the Nordisk Kyrkotidning, through which one of his bitterest opponents, Dr. J. Ternstrom, generally attacked him. The result of this policy was a tremendous increase in the circulation of the Pietist and the gradual decline of the hostile Kyrkotidning, which was forced to liquidate by 1849.[1] When this paper no longer could serve as a medium of expression, the clergy attacked him in their sermons. Said Dr. Ternstrom in a sermon as late as 1867:

> Christ has ordained the Church, but when the devil wants to harm the Church, he has in our time ordained another institution, called the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation.[2]

Up to mid-century the daily press carried on a smearing campaign against Rosenius, holding him up before the people as a lunatic. Such a respectable daily as Nya Dagligt Allehanda accused him of being a thief who stole from the collection baskets. Behind much of the hatred of clergy and press was the zeal of the Established Church seeking to protect its age-long prerogatives.

But the opposition was not confined to the clergy and the press. Often great crowds of people would gather at his services to disturb and even harm those in attendance. Conventicles and meetings were disturbed, if not broken up, by screaming, drunken rowdies who had been hired to disturb and to threaten the life of both audience and preacher. Especially did the opposition reach a climax when Jenny Lind, the noted songstress, left the stage and joined the new evangelical movement. Shortly afterwards Rosenius wrote:

> Now every house was aflame; now almost every newspaper hissed; now my name for weeks appeared in the papers in connection with the coarsest madness about our meetings, namely, that lewdness was practised and dancing in the nude occurred --etc., things not deserving of mention. By and by the world also employed the same means; when the hated Methodist preacher was to be made more detested, they played a comedy at the Little Theater, entitled The Reader Clergyman (Läsareprästen), which during two weeks was played every night and even in the forenoon, a thing unheard of before; so great was the zeal to infuriate the mob.[3]

However, by his strong personality, earnestness, and genuine friend-

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[1] Roseniusbiografien, pp. 143-71.

[2] Ibid., pp. 199-200.

[3] Ibid., pp. 238-39.

ship, Rosenius was able to save many a threatening situation and finally overcome all opposition. By mid-century the revival broke forth in full power in spite of all opposition, and Rosenius wrote: "The dead bones begin to move; encouraging reports of this could be cited from nearly every part of the kingdom."[1] Nothing seemingly could check its progress or dim its glory. In June, 1853, he wrote:

> This month we have been altogether deluged by visitors, meetings, and conferences with regard to the present movement in the country.

And again:

> Oh, what times! God indeed begins to revive his work in the midst of the years. . . . .God our God and mighty savior, reveal thyself--reveal thy power.[2]

Rosenius was a preacher of great gifts, not the least of which was his amazing energy and versatility. In his ability to reach the hearts of all hearers, irrespective of their station in life, he has few equals in the history of the church. He preached successfully not only in Stockholm but in all parts of Sweden and Finland, not only in churches but in schoolhouses, courtrooms, auditoriums, homes and frequently in the open air. Undoubtedly, however, he was destined to exercise his greatest influence upon his time as a writer. A prodigious writer he was not only the sole editor of Pietisten and Missionstidningen, but was also the author of a great number of devotional books. His most monumental work was his two volume commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. In addition he was the author of an impressive list of pamphlets, articles, and sermons. His books and articles were household readings in pious Swedish homes. Many of them were translated into Norwegian and Danish, two into English, and one into Chinese. Moreover, the constantly widening circulation of Pietisten constituted an ever increasing influence. Often, important articles which had appeared in Pietisten were reprinted in large quantities and distributed. Such was the case especially with the new hymns written by Rosenius himself and set to music

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[1] Sven Lodin, Carl Olof Rosenius. Hans liv och förkunnelse (Stockholm: Evangeliska Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Förlag, 1922), p. 96. To be cited as Rosenius, Hans liv och förkunnelse.

[2] Ibid., pp. 96-97.

by his associate, Oscar Ahnfelt, the singer-preacher who was called "the Swedish Sankey" by the Swedish immigrants in America. In a way it can be said of Rosenius what was said of Luther regarding Germany, that "he conquered Sweden by his songs."[1]

Rosenius was also a great organizer and had the ability to gather about him a number of liberal-minded and gifted leaders whose services were to be of inestimable value in the unification of his work. Among these were such men as Bishop Thomander of Lund, the brilliant churchman and leader of the temperance movement, Dr. P. Wieselgren of Gothenburg, the learned missionary and scholar, Peter Fjellstedt,[2] Rev. Jacob Lundborg, Rev. B. E. Wadstrom, Prof. Waldemar Rudin, Lector P. M. Elmblad, Count K. G. Lewenhaupt, Baron J. Alstrom, and a host of other noble and God-fearing men.[3] With them he helped to shape the programs of the Deaconess Institute,[4] the Swedish Evangelical Alliance,[5] and the Swedish Tract Society,[6] Most important, however, was his organizing genius in the founding and guiding of the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation (Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen), organized in 1856 to give strength and cohesiveness to the revival movement.[7]

Rosenius and his friends were unanimously in favor of an organization in which more lay talent could be utilized. At a pre-organizational meeting, Fjellstedt went much further and advocated, in view of the spiritual indifference of the clergy of

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[1] C. O. Rosenius, The Believer Free from the Law. Translated and supplied with an introduction by Adolph Hult (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1923), see introduction. See also Lodin, Rosenius. Hans liv och förkunnelse, p. 76.

[2] Fjellstedt spoke twelve languages, wrote four more, and read fourteen besides--in all thirty.

[3] Rosenius, The Believer Free from the Law, p. 14.

[4] Roseniusbiografien, p. 222. This was founded in 1849.

[5] Ekman, op. cit., p. 429. This Alliance established in 1853, was a branch of the Evangelical Alliance founded in London in 1849. During its early stages in Sweden this organization did not enjoy much success, but its ecumenical principles were gradually to be recognized and realized.

[6] This society was actually founded by Abraham Keyser, a merchant and one of Rosenius' most loyal friends. Founded in 1854, it was later to become a part of the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation. Ibid., pp. 429-30; see Roseniusbiografien, p. 315.

[7] Ibid., pp. 323-24.

the Established Church, a Lutheran Free Church modeled after the Free Church of Scotland. While Fjellstedt had many supporters, the majority at the counsel of Rosenius discouraged any premature measures that would lead to a secession from the Established Church.[1] An initial move, however, had been made. As a result, Lundborg was sent to Scotland to investigate the organization of the Scottish Free Church. Upon his return in the spring of 1856, he brought home a plan for an organization which, though entirely free in its organization and operation, still was built within the framework of the church.[2] The result was the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation.

This organization, then, was not an independent denomination outside the framework of the Established Church, but was to operate within it, though independent of it. It was to subscribe to the doctrinal tenets and creeds of the Swedish Church and its main objective was to be:

> A purposeful and orderly use of the new volunteer talents (krafter) which in our land already have begun to serve in the gospel, to constitute a common point of union as well as to call forth new and hitherto unused talents, to offer opportunity for such to make their contribution through personal work, pamphlets, books, annual and occasional gifts and wills, or in other ways make their contribution to the winning of the intended purpose--the growth of the Kingdom of Christ among professing Christians.[3]

The administration of the Foundation rested with a board of twelve members of whom Rosenius was one. He was also a member of the executive board.[4] By 1859 the activities of the Foundation were divided into two departments, one for the supervision of the colporteur work and the other for the distribution of Christian literature. In addition to the executive board, the organizational program also provided for seventy-nine delegates from various communities in the country at large as representatives and sponsors from the mission associations and adherents of the Foundation.

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[1] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1312-13.

[2] Ibid., pp. 1314-15.

[3] Roseniusbiografien, pp. 323-24.

[4] Ekman, op. cit., p. 1441. See also B. Wadström, Ur minnet och dagboken. Anteckningar från åren 1848-1897 (Stockholm: Fosterlands-Stiftelsens Förlag, 1897-1900), I, 228-30.

The actual work was carried on by colporteurs, or booksellers, who eventually became preachers.[1] The activity of the Foundation thus became, with the permission of the State Church, synonymous with lay preaching.

The colporteurs, however, were met at the outset with opposition by many of the clergy. The provisions of the Conventicle Law of 1726, though modified, were still in effect and many of the clergy, and often the press, called upon the government to enforce the law. There were numerous instances of colporteurs being forbidden to preach or distribute literature despite their authorization. With the growth of separatism, the ill feeling between clergy and colporteurs grew more intense.[2] It was to reach a new climax when the dissenters gradually withdrew from the services of the Established Church and from the Holy Communion services. Since this was contrary to the intentions of the founders of the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation and violated its constitution, it was frowned upon by its leaders.

Needless to say, the Foundation became an effective instrument in disseminating religious literature, using the two religious periodicals, Pietisten and Missionstidningen (to which was added Budbäraren), as the chief organs of the Foundation and its best medium for bringing like-minded people into contact with one another.[3] Pietisten also proved to be the instrument that widened the gulf between the State Church and the freer movements--this in spite of the fact that sermons and articles continued to be in complete harmony with the Lutheran doctrine and confession. In 1861 it was decided to expand the work to include foreign missions. To that end the Foundation became instrumental in providing workers, for whose training institutes were established.[4]

It was obvious that Rosenius as a leader of this new religious movement should come to carry a great responsibility. The effects of overwork began to tell in 1865 and his health began to fail.[5] When he died in February, 1868,[6] he was no longer a derided,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 235-38. [2] Ibid.

[3] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 435, 1315. Wadström, op. cit., I,238-41.

[4] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 434-35.

[5] Ibid., pp. 435-38; see also Roseniusbiografien, pp. 398-401.

[6] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 438-39.

intruding layman, but a revered and beloved spiritual father to tens of thousands among clergy and laity in many lands. Because of his conservative leadership and confessional soundness, he had become esteemed by the entire Established Church.

CHAPTER V

PAUL PETER WALDENSTRÖM, ROSENIUS' SUCCESSOR

After the death of Rosenius, the editorship of the Pietisten was given to Dr. Paul Peter Waldenström, an ordained minister of the State Church and a teacher at the Gymnasium of Gävle,[1] the man who was destined to become largely responsible for the founding of the Mission Covenant in Sweden.

Waldenström was born July 20, 1838, in Luleå, Norrland, Sweden, the son of Erik Magnus Waldenström, a physician, and Margareta Magdalena Govenius.[2] The family was large and home life strict and simple. The children were expected to be at their studies at five o'clock each morning, having first dressed and made their own beds. In this atmosphere of strict discipline, the children received the first rudiments of education.[3] According to his own statement, young Paul had completely mastered all of Luther's Shorter Catechism and the first section of the Larger Catechism when, at the age of seven, he entered the secondary school at Luleå.[4]

In 1855 the young man matriculated at the Gymnasium of Uppsala, where he was graduated in 1857.[5] The following year he entered the University of Uppsala. By 1862 he had obtained the preliminary degree of Candidate in Philosophy, and in 1863 he attained to the doctorate, his major fields being Greek, Latin,

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[1] Axel Anderson, Svenska Missionförbundet, I, p. 35.

[2] Wilhelm Sjöholm, "Paul Peter Waldenström. Några data ur hans liv," Minnesskrift, utgiven med anledning av P. P. Waldenströms 75 års dag, den 20 juli, 1913 (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag, 1913), p. 9. Will be referred to as Minnesskrift.

[3] Paul Peter Waldenströms Minnesanteckningar, 1838-1875, Samlade och ordnade av Berhard Nyren (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag, 1928), pp. 26 ff.

[4] Ibid., p. 39.

[5] This was a private educational institution.

Hebrew,and theology. That same year he accepted a teaching position at the Gymnasium of Växiö. In 1864 he was ordained minister in the Swedish state church and called to the professorship in theology, Greek, and Hebrew at the Gymnasium of Umeå. In 1867 he was given a government stipend for a pedagogical research project in Hannover and Würtemberg, and during 1873-74 was engaged at the University of Uppsala in a study of the symbolical books of the church. The results of these studies were published in Latin under the title De justificatione quid statuant libri symbolici Ecclesiae Lutheranae.[1] In 1874 Waldenström became lecturer at the College of Gävle, and occupied this position until his retirement in 1905. For twenty-one years he served as member of the Riksdag; he was also a member of four ecclesiastical convocations.[2] If not independently blazing a new trail, he was usually aligned with the progressives whether in the Riksdag or in the Convocation. His clear and simple arguments and his agility in dialectic won for him the respect of his colleagues and opponents. During these years he worked with unflagging industry for greater religious freedom--for recognition of the new religious movements. Typical of his contribution in this field were his debates on the question of separate communion services and of the legitimacy of lay baptism.[3] In both of these points he finally won the recognition of both Riksdag and Convocation. He thrice visited and traveled widely in the United States and received the honorary degree of Doctor of Theology at Yale University in 1889.[4]

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[1] Minnesskrift, pp. 9-10.

[2] O. Johansson, P. P. Waldenström i Kyrkomötet. Hans motioner och anföranden i kyrkliga och teologiska frågor vid fyra kyrkomöten (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag, 1931).

[3] Minnesanteckningar are Waldenström's autobiographical notes and as such constitute our richest primary source material. Apart from Minnesanteckningar, the best biography on Waldenström is N. P. Ollen's work Paul Peter Waldenström. En levnadsteckning. (Stockholm: Svenska Missionsförbundets Förlag, 1917).

[3] In addition to the biographical works cited, see P. Waldenström, Genom Amerikas Förenta Stater, Reseskildringar. (Chicago: The Mission Friend Publishing Company, 1890), p. 139. There is a similar second volume by Waldenström, giving the experiences and impression of his second visit to the United States in 1902 in acceptance of the invitation by the Yale University to attend its second centenary celebration that year. It is entitled Nya färder i Amerikas Förenta Stater (Stockholm: Aktiebolaget Normans Förlag, 1902).

In recognition of his seventy-fifth anniversary in 1913, he was made Honorary Jubilee Doctor at the University of Uppsala.[1]

Up to the time of his graduation from the Gymnasium of Uppsala in 1857, young Waldenström had given little thought to the pietistic movement or the religious awakening which had begun to sweep the country. Although at this time he had an extensive general knowledge of the Bible, he had never read it with the intention of securing any spiritual help. His actual Bible study began in his attempt to locate an alleged scripture to which his father would often refer in jest.[2] As he read he became increasingly convinced of his own inner need. As a result he decided to offer himself as a missionary candidate. Then he read in a religious periodical that a missionary candidate must be able to relate his own conversion experience. Since he had had no such experience, he found the door to the mission field closed to him. His interest in religious things, however, had been awakened. He began to study Arndt's "True Christianity" and to visit conventicles conducted by the Readers. As a result his soul underwent a spiritual experience though he would never venture to give any date when this took place. He was at that time employed as a tutor at the home of the governor of the province of Kalmar.[3]

The governor soon recognized the spiritual transformation in the tutor. As a result the governor sought at first to give more of a religious atmosphere to the family life. Each Sunday he read a sermon by Archbishop Olof Wallin and conducted family devotions. This came to an abrupt end when he learned that the tutor was conducting devotional meetings at the old people's home of the city, reading Arndt's "True Christianity" and other pietistic books and having prayer for the inmates. In a rage he forbade him to visit this home any more, so that "the inmates in their quiet godliness" would not be disturbed. His displeasure may be summarized in his words, "I would rather see my son Axel as a culprit in the penitentiary than as a reader in your circles." He

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[1] Minnesskrift, p. 10.

[2] His father would jestingly refer to a passage which allegedly told of Cain and Abel going into a strange land to find themselves wives. In search for this non-existent scripture, young Waldenström read through the entire Bible. Minnesanteckningar, pp. 87-88.

[3] Waldenström, Minnesanteckningar, pp. 88-89.

also threatened to expel him within twenty-four hours if he did not cease his activities. Attempting to seek advice from Ånelius, an assistant pastor and the spiritual adviser at the old people's home, Waldenström found that an order barring all future admittances had been given by pastor Ånelius. Shortly afterwards Waldenström was compelled to terminate his services as tutor at the home of the governor. Supplied with credentials from the bishop, he returned home, where he was courteously but cooly received by his father who had received a greatly biased letter from the governor. He spent the remainder of the summer at home, waiting for the fall term to open at the University of Uppsala.[1]

Upon his return to Uppsala, Waldenström became a regular attendant at the Trinity Church, where the pious pastor, Lars Rosengren, was rector. Under his ministry the young student's spiritual experiences deepened. It was in this church in 1859 that the communion service was first conducted exclusively for "true believers," with Pastors Rosengren and Fjellstedt officiating. For this breach of the church law, Rosengren was called before the consistory and warned.[2] At subsequent communion services the believing students would arrange to be served in a group, for they already held a strong conviction that the Holy Communion was instituted for "true believers" only. They would also come together and read the works of Arndt, Murbeck, Nohrborg, Schartau, and others. Once Waldenström read from the Pietisten, but when this was discovered he was no longer asked to read.[3] In the meantime he and his fellow students would be invited on preaching itineraries, but since they had already become known to entertain pietistic notions they met with somewhat varied experiences. At times they were even refused admittance to the churches, for they were believed to be critical of the Established Church.[4]

In the spring of 1858, Waldenström met Carl Olof Rosenius. When he heard Rosenius preach, the young scholar exclaimed: "What a river of living water there was in his sermon."[5] Though warned

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[1] Ibid., pp. 89-99. [2] Ibid., pp. 102-03.

[3] Ibid., pp. 104-06. [4] Ibid., pp. 106-20.

[5] Ibid., pp. 144 ff. He added also, "Such a wonderful Easter I have never had before or after."

of Rosenius, Waldenström felt an unbounded confidence in him. They became fast friends, a friendship that was to mature and continue until severed by the death of the older man. After their first meeting, Waldenström often visited the Bethlehem Church in Stockholm and also became a constant reader of the Pietisten. As already noted, he eventually became its editor after the death of Rosenius in 1868.[1]

As editor of the Pietisten, Waldenström for a number of years followed his famous predecessor doctrinally. Organizationally, however, he showed a greater spirit of independence and advocated a more autonomous principle for the Foundation in its relationship to the Established Church. Thus, he defended more vigorously the work of the lay preachers, and also defended the building of small chapels or mission houses on the ground that the parish churches were closed to lay preachers. Contrary to Rosenius, Waldenström was soon to advocate the right of believers to meet in conventicles, outside of the church, for the celebration of the Holy Communion; whenever possible, he himself officiated in such meetings. Since Waldenström was a minister in the State Church, it is natural that his opinion carried a great deal of weight. His prestige was also enhanced by his established reputation as a master of oratory.

However, it was his new theory of the Atonement that was to precipitate a religious controversy that shook the religious foundations of Sweden. Since his studies had led him to inquire into Lutheran doctrine, he summed up his findings in a sermon for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, 1872, on the topic of the atonement which was published in the Pietisten in June, 1872.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 145-52. The Foundation had set up two candidates: a rector P. Welinder and Waldenström. The latter was thirty years old at the time when he was elected to this post of leadership. This same year he also became a member of the Convocation. See also N. P. Ollen, op. cit., pp. 53-57.

[2] Waldenström in Minnesanteckningar, pp. 267-74, relates how he came to be interested in the Scriptural teaching regarding the atonement. In a conversation with two colleagues in Umeå in 1870, one of the clergyman exclaimed: "Think how wonderful that God is reconciled in Christ!" Without premeditation Waldenström rejoined: "Where is that written?" The question astounded all three and they joined in a hearty laugh, for they knew that it was written everywhere in the Bible. To prove this, they attempted to cite scriptures, but were unable to find any. This revelation

Nowhere, wrote Waldenström, does Scripture teach that it is God who has become reconciled through the death of Christ. The fall of man into sin caused no change in God's nature, for Scripture teaches that God is unchangeable. He remains the same irrespective of man's condition. Moreover, Scripture testifies to the fact that "God is love," not only that He loves, but the very essence of his eternal and unchangeable nature is love. He loved man to the extent that "He gave His only begotten Son." God is a loving Father who sent His Son in order that men might turn to Him. The basis of the atonement was love, not wrath. God's wrath is directed against sin and evil and not against man, provided man will forsake his sin. The atonement, therefore, was wrought not to reconcile God but to reconcile man with God. Through this reconciliation, man's sin is removed and he is made acceptable to God. Man, and not God, is the object of the atonement or reconciliation.

The content of this sermon and Waldenström's teaching on the subject of the atonement were systematized the following year into five points and made part of Waldenström's "Theological Theses for Pastoral Examinations."[1] They are as follows:

> The fall of man did not cause any change in the heart and will of God.
>
> No cruelty or ire in the mind of God was ever hindering man's salvation.
>
> The only change caused by the fall and sin was a change in man himself, so that he, being a sinner, turned away from God and from the life in him.

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caused Waldenström to renew his study of the Scriptures in the original and to read extensively the works of such prominent theologians as Gerlauch, Lisco, Gossner, Luthardt, and Olshausen. By 1872 he had come to his own opinion and wrote his sermon for the Pietisten. Thereupon, he read the manuscript to two of his friends. They urged some corrections. Rewriting the sermon, he again called upon them for an opinion. Again they suggested some changes. After a second revision, they suggested its publication.

[1]These were published in March, 1873. On the basis of Waldenström's Minnesanteckningar, his biographers have generally assumed that the five points appeared in the Pietisten, June, 1872, in the order and form given above. While this is not the case, the gist of the teaching in the five points are found in the sermon. The "Theological Theses for Pastoral Examination" constituted a Dissertation submitted to the Chapter of Härnösand. I have used David Nyvall's translation in his The Swedish Covenanters (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1933), pp. 41-42.

> Because of this change in man, an atonement was necessary for his salvation, but not an atonement that had to reconcile or conciliate God and make him again gracious, but an atonement which took away man's sin and made him again righteous.
>
> This atonement was God's work accomplished by Christ on the Cross.

This sermon caused a storm of protest from the pulpit and the press. The question everywhere was, "Where is it written?" A search of the Scriptures followed. As a result a large segment of the population became Bible readers and thousands are said to have been won over to Waldenström's interpretation of the text.

Three years later, Waldenström attacked the current Lutheran theological position that Christ was man's substitute before God and that, in Him, the requirements of the divine law had been met. According to this position, God had made Christ to be a substitute for man and had exacted from him the punishment due the sinner and the world. Through Christ's fulfillment of the law, man is made righteous even as if he himself had fulfilled the requirements of the law. Christ had paid for sin and guilt. God's requirement had been met. The forgiveness of sin in the Old Testament was an arrangement on credit; in the New Testament it was forgiveness in advance. This being so, said Waldenström, why need something more be added, such as faith in the forgiveness of sins? How can faith be made a prerequisite of salvation? If the payment has been made, then the full penalty has been exacted whether I believe it or not. Am I then to be saved because I believe in an accomplished fact which cannot be denied, a fact equally true both for believers and unbelievers; or am I to be saved because I believe in the crucified and risen Saviour on behalf of whom, according to the Scriptures, God himself is entreating us "to be reconciled to God"?[1]

During the years following 1872, Waldenström continued to expound his theological beliefs in books and pamphlets. Thus he published The Meaning of Atonement in 1873, Herren är from, Lösepenningen and Guds Lamm in the beginning of 1875. In The Lord is Right, he advances the view that the concepts of God's love and God's righteousness do not conflict but actually conplement one

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[1] 2 Cor. 5: 20.

another.[1] In the same year he also came to a new insight regarding the view that "this atonement was God's work accomplished by Christ on the Cross," which had been the last point in his sermon of 1872. On this point, he had held the generally accepted belief that the atonement, being the work of God, had been accomplished by Christ on the Cross with the result that "the world has become reconciled to God,"[2] and that Christ had removed the sin of the world, which is called the"reconciliation of the world with God."[3]

He tells us how he had been challenged about this view by a friend in the words "Where is it written?" He wrote his friend to visit him, that together they would find an abundance of Scriptural proof for his contention. His friend came and Waldenström began citing well known Scripture verses. But to his own astonishment, he says, he found that none of them said that the world <u>is</u> reconciled. All stated that the purpose of Christ's coming was that He <u>should</u> reconcile the world, but nowhere was it written that this reconciliation is accomplished. He confesses that this revelation came to him as a painful shock and made him exclaim: "Good God and Father, is not even this true?" Further studies failed to substantiate his published opinion. After much mental struggle whether or not, in view of his already changed theological belief, he should publicly expound his new findings, he came to the decision that "truth lasts the longest," and that he would continually follow truth wherever he found it.[4]

Nyvall in commenting upon Waldenström's new theological position writes as follows:

> And most unwillingly he discovered not one single statement in the Scriptures speaking of the atonement as something once for all accomplished, but everywhere as an appeal to the faith and will of man. On the Cross, neither God nor man was atoned as a matter of fact, but the atonement of man was made possible in each individual on the condition of faith. Read wherever he wished, in the Old as well as in the New Testament, atonement, he found, means purification and is, therefore, a term wholly inapplicable to God. In the New Testament it means

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[1]Anderson, <u>Svenska Missionsförbundet</u>, p. 41.

[2]Waldenström, <u>Om försoningens betydelse</u>, p. 24.

[3]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 35.

[4]Anderson, <u>op. cit</u>., pp. 45-48, cited from a ministerial meeting in Stockholm, August 1-3, 1877.

> taking away sin by forgiveness and is, therefore, not a work accomplished but a divine grace offered to sinners all the time through the crucified and risen Saviour, and accomplished wherever accepted by faith.[1]

However, Waldenström's new doctrine was considered heretical and a new storm broke over his head. As early as 1873, Rector P. P. Welinder, summarized his opinion of the Waldenströmian teaching as follows: (1) that which is true and Scriptural is not new; (2) that which is new is neither true nor Scriptural; (3) the entire teaching appears to be a peculiar mixture of difficult contradictions."[2]

Pastor G. E. Beskow said:

We have seen that the Bible itself expounds the words that Christ reconciled the world and sin when it states in the clearest and most definite way (1) that He removed sin, (2) that He paid for our guilt, (3) that God was the only creditor and, (4) that Christ gave himself as a sacrifice and gift to God. This being the teaching of the Bible and no human device, the untenability of Waldenström's new teaching, that the world and sin have become reconciled but not God, has been proven, as far as we can understand.[3]

Bishop L. Landgren commented:

> Mr. Waldenström says that God is not angry with the sinner, but that the sinner, nevertheless, is overtaken (Drabbas) by the wrath of God. What is meant by such subtleties? Perhaps God is left handed, so that his blows strike the wrong object. Or is God's wrath like cholera, yellow fever, or leprosy which overtakes man as a consequence of the order of nature but not as a proof that God is ungracious? The discovery appears to be that although God's love for man is unchangeably the same after the fall as before, yet he permits his 'loved ones' to burn in eternal agonies, for Mr. Waldenström believes in these agonies as firmly as the 'scribes and theologians.' If God really loves all men invariably the same and to the same degree, then, in accordance with Mr. Waldenström's often repeated explanations, the damned in their dark abode are equally as much God's loved ones as John and Paul. Is God's love invariable? Then his love to Lucifer in the abyss must be as great now as when he radiated before the throne of God in heaven. . . . .The old Socinian assertion that in Scripture God never is said to be appeased or reconciled is repeated in our day with much cocksureness by the rationalizing theologians of Germany; and our Swedish friend Waldenström in making this discovery has become so happy that his heart jumps with joy, as he writes in The Gothenburg Weekly.[4]

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[1] Nyvall, op. cit., p. 43. [2] Anderson, op. cit., p. 42.

[3] A. Ohlden, Lektor P. Waldenstrom, p. 94. [4] Ibid., pp. 94 ff.

Rector August Thornberg says:

If one goes so far in the denial of the importance of sin to God that one assumes that God can forgive sins without price, then one must also consider it altogether unnecessary, and hence impossible, that the Son of God suffered the punishment in our place. And this far have we now come in the denial of the significance of sin and redemption.[1]

The Swedish press also entered into the controversy. Lund's Weekly wrote in November, 1876, as follows:

> 'Where is it written?' is asked in our days by an apparently gifted and spiritually burning, but fanatical and ambitious, man who has to carry on his conscience the heavy burden of bringing disquietude and confusion to thousands of hearts and of sowing the seeds of spiritual dissensions and party hatred in our land by inciting struggles about the teaching and order of the church. 'Where is it written?' asks Lektor Waldenström, gathers about him a multitude of adherents who worship him and hail him as a new epoch-making reformer, without comprehending that his appeal to 'what is written' does nothing but refer to his interpretation of it, an interpretation which in spirit of Christian humility he ought to realize will partake of the imperfection of all human opinion, but which he, in religious intoxication and pride, considers infallible. We do not intend to engage in a struggle about the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement nor his 'sacramental question,' but we only wonder if he and all those who more or less consciously work with him for a schism within the church and a revival of party-spirit have sufficiently considered the word which also 'is written' and which reads: 'Be not wise in your own conceit.'

Of an entirely different type is the comment in Framåt:

> If we ask; 'What does Waldenström want? Does he want darkness or light, progress or stagnation?'--then the answer must be Waldenström's work is in harmony with the time, it is a product of the wind of the new time which blows through all conditions, dissipating prejudices, weakening tradition and causing defeat of the old customs.[3]

These are samplings[4] from a tremendous number of books and pamphlets written about Waldenström's new teaching. Many of the opponents descended to personal attacks, even from the pulpits. He and his followers were privately and publicly caricatured with extreme malice. Few of the theologians openly sided with Walden-

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[1] Ibid., p. 96. [2] Anderson, op. cit., pp. 37-38.

[3] Ibid.

[4] The reader is referred to N. P. Ollen, Paul Peter Waldenström. En levnadsteckning, pp. 58-76,

ström, though a number of them were very sympathetic; among the latter should be mentioned Prof. O. F. Myhrberg of Uppsala and Pastor E. J. Ekman, who was later to play a leading role in the founding of the new denomination. Waldenström's mastery of oratory, his ability as a debater, and his constant appeal to Scripture made him a formidable opponent and his cause a popular one. "Everywhere in the country in large and small circles they discussed in a spirit of prayer to God the meaning of the atonement, and hand in hand with this searching of the Word went a sweeping revival over the land."[1]

His teaching, however, was to bring upon Waldenström the displeasure of the church in an official way. After a sermon given in a school house in Frelluga, Bollnäs, in December, 1878, Rev. G. L. Collinder, the Rector of the parish church, accused him before the Cathedral Chapter of having in his sermon violated the condition agreed upon in granting him permission to speak in the school house. At the instigation of Collinder, the Chapter thereupon demanded of Waldenström a definite explanation regarding his doctrine. In a lengthy apology, Waldenström gave a historical account of his activities and teaching, concluding with a concise confession of his faith. On May 24, 1879, the Cathedral Chapter gave its verdict expressing its displeasure with the teaching and demeanor of Waldenström and exhorting him, under veiled threat of legal consequences, to avoid in the future the mistakes of which he had been found guilty.[2]

The theological struggles over the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement were to have far greater consequences than anticipated by those in the midst of it. The constant reference to the Bible in the watchword "Where is it written?" was to be of tremendous importance to the free movement. It was to give rise to new questions, such as justification, the right of the Christians to meet in private for the observance of the Lord's Supper, the right of lay preaching, and the legality of baptism by laymen. And all of these questions were of more than a theological interest. They arose out of the struggle for religious freedom. Thus it may be said that the Swedish Mission Covenant, when it was founded in

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[1] Anderson, loc. cit.

[2] Ibid.; also Ollen, op. cit., pp. 77-86.

1878, did not arise because of theological controversy over the atonement. This controversy hastened the organization of the Covenant, but the antecedent factors were rooted in a conflict that goes much farther back than the questions of atonement, the struggles for religious freedom referred to above. It will be our aim to relate briefly some of the contemporaneous questions. One of these had to do with lay preaching.

The famous conventicle law of 1726 had prohibited all gatherings for religious purposes where texts were read and expounded by laymen. As a result of this law, great numbers of Readers were imprisoned and fined through the watchful zeal of marshals and priests. By 1858 the demand for the removal of this law from the statutes had become so strong that its more extreme features were rescinded that same year. A provision was retained, however, which forbade meetings conducted by laymen, except with special permission by the clergy. Such meetings, if permitted, were not to be held during a public church service.

An amendment in 1868 permitted such services to be conducted at the same time as the public service of the church, provided that these services would in no wise become a disturbance to the regular church service. Moreover, admittance must not be refused the clergy, members of the consistory, or civil servants in any given place. Civil servants were empowered to disband the service if they thought it advisable to do so. Inserted in the law, however, was a proviso which read that: "Should anyone who is not a clergyman or by law empowered to preach publicly appear at such a service for the purpose of preaching or lecturing in a manner which might lead to a schism within the church or engender contempt for the public worship or an undermining of the sacredness of religion, it becomes the duty of the vestry (kyrkorådet) to forbid him to appear in this role within the church."[1] There was also provision made for fining those who violated the law.

To all appearances, the church had again come out victorious. Actually, however, the adherents of the free movements were to gain from this suppression of religious freedom.[2] There was,

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[1] Ollen, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

[2] One needs only to bear in mind the protests made by the English government to the Swedish State and its plea for religious freedom. The French Reformed Free Church in Paris, in 1858, sent

for example, the harassed Rosenius who was forbidden by the chief of police to continue his conventicle meetings. Rosenius answered that he could not obey such an injunction. Thereupon the chief clenched his fists and exclaimed that if Rosenius would not cease his conventicle activities, police would be placed at the doors to prevent people from entering. To which Rosenius quietly replied: "If you do, we naturally cannot gather in that auditorium but this will only lead to the engaging of another meeting place." The chief of police immediately realized the impossibility of combating a movement with such a spirit. Moreover, as a result of the governmental policy, the schismatic tendency spread and expressed itself in the formation of mission societies or associations and in the construction of small chapels (missionshus) throughout the country. Despite the fact that these mission societies were formed on the basis of the Lutheran faith and the Augsburg Confession, they were still to be exposed to the high handed policy of clergy and government for decades to come. It was only gradually that the church came to realize the value of lay workers in the church, both in preaching and in the distribution of literature. While the law was to remain on the statute books for decades to come, the church after 1890 made little or no effort to enforce it because public opinion had, by this time, become strong and well organized in its opposition.

Another factor of immense importance in the struggle for religious freedom was the desire on the part of many of the dissenters to celebrate the Lord's Supper in private gatherings. We have noted the occasion, in 1859, at which Pastors Rosengren and Fjellstedt officiated at Uppsala[1] in the first communion service exclusively for devout Christians. Since that time a great number of mission societies had been formed within the framework of the Foundation, and in many instances the members of these societies had come together in private groups for the purpose of celebrating the Holy Communion. Usually, they requested to have these services conducted by a "believing" minister within the church. In the prov-

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a resolution calling upon the Executive Board of the Synod to petition the Protestant Church of Sweden to abolish the intolerant provisions of the law.

[1] Supra, p. 59.

inces of Närke and Värmland attempts were made to secure "believing" ministers who would devote their entire time to travel and the administration of the sacrament among these groups.[1] This attempt failed when the appointed authorities forbade such a move. As a result, so-called "sacramental unions" were formed consisting of Christians who desired to celebrate the communion separately. Usually these groups sought permission to use the church with an ordained clergyman officiating. When this was refused they would meet elsewhere, often in the chapel or "mission house" with or without the ministration of the clergy.[2]

How seriously this question was considered is seen in the many conferences and meetings that were held during 1875 and 1876. In July, 1876, a conference was held in Örebro in order to discuss the question "With what right do we gather to commemorate the death of Christ without the benefit of the clergy at such occasions?" The problem revolved around the fundamental issue as to whether the State Church was exclusively synonymous with the Christian Church. The general opinion arrived at was that this was not the case. If there were Christian people outside the State Church, and this was unquestionably the case, such individuals would also have the right to gather around the Holy Sacrament. For the Sacrament was given to the entire Christian Church, not merely to a branch of it, even when the branch was as important as the State Church. Luther's answer to the Bohemian peasants was quoted in which he states that he could find no place in the Word of God which prescribes that we must have the benefit of clergy and church in the distribution of the gift of the Sacrament. It was a gift to God's children and they alone have the right to use that gift as they see fit. H. W. Beecher was also quoted at length to the same effect.[3]

It is doubtful that Waldenström had as yet given much thought to this question. He was at this time engaged in the theological controversy provoked by his interpretation of the atonement. An unforeseen incident, however, brought him into the midst of it. In 1876, the mission society of Uppsala at Pentecost requested him to officiate at a private celebration of the Communion service.

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[1] Ollen, op. cit., p. 108.

[2] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1493-94.

[3] Ibid., pp. 1494-95.

Waldenström accepted the invitation. But Archbishop Sundberg thereupon denied them the use of any church in the city. This forced the Society to gather in its own chapel, the "mission house." True to his promise, Waldenström officiated although he undoubtedly suspected that unpleasant consequences would follow.[1]

The storm broke shortly afterwards. Waldenström was requested by the consistory to give a complete and written explanation of his participation in the service within two weeks. At first he refused to comply, stating that he was under the jurisdiction of Härnösand and not responsible to the authority of the Uppsala consistory. Again he was requested to submit an explanation. Again he refused, appealing to the court, Svea Hovrätt. The High Court refused to enter the controversy at this stage.[2] Thereupon, in a lengthy apology Waldenström stated his case and quoted the law to support his position. The law provided that permission should be granted members of the Established Church to take communion in the church of their choice and to secure the services of a clergyman of their choice should they so desire. But the consistory refused to admit the right of separate communion services, stating that all services must be announced as public services, and that the officiating clergyman must have the permission of the consistory.

The case dragged on before the consistory, but in May, 1877, a judgment was rendered against Waldenström in the form of a warning against future actions of a similar sort. But convinced that the judgment was based on personal prejudice, Waldenström refused to acknowledge this warning.[3] He, thereupon, appealed at once to the High Court. In a verdict handed down in January, 1878, the High Court upheld the judgment of the consistory, and added an additional rebuff in the form of a small fine because of Waldenström's allegedly contemptuous attitude toward the consistory. Waldenström then appealed to the King, but, in May, the King upheld the judgment of the Court.[4] By this decision it was made

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[1]Ekman, loc cit.; see also Ollen, op. cit., pp. 108-09.

[2]Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1496-97.

[3]In the many exchanges of letters between the consistory and Waldenström, the latter calls attention to the fact that several ministers had officiated under similar circumstances without being cited by the consistory.

[4]This interesting case, fully documented, is given by

unmistakably clear that henceforth no minister had the right to officiate or assist at a separate communion service. Rather than acknowledge the justice of this arbitrary treatment of the dissenters, Waldenström resigned his ministry within the State Church.[1]

Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1493-1525.

[1] Ibid., p. 1550.

CHAPTER VI

THE FOUNDING OF THE MISSION COVENANT IN SWEDEN

In 1876, the same year in which Waldenström conducted his communion service in Uppsala, a convocation of preachers was held in Stockholm from August 15-28. In attendance were a large gathering of clergymen within the church as well as lay preachers and colporteurs. One of many questions discussed was: "For whom is the Lord's Supper instituted, and what ought the believers' attitude be with regard to present communion observance in the Church?"[1] As a result of their discussion it was decided to form a committee which would be authorized to petition the King for greater freedom in the celebration of Holy Communion. The petition bore the signature of nine men among whom were four ordained clergymen, two lay preachers, one merchant and one army officer. Waldenström, for he was among them, and one other signatory was designated to seek an audience with the King.[2]

The king received the petitioners kindly, but felt himself unable to meet their request at that time. He explained that as the head of the Lutheran Church in Sweden it was his duty to seek unity among all her members, a unity which he feared would be threatened if he granted the petition. However, he promised a thorough study of the problem.[3]

As a result of this convocation and petition, a nucleus had been formed for future work. The committee was authorized to receive contributions and to call another meeting of pastors and laymen as soon as possible. In August, 1877, a second meeting was held in Stockholm with approximately seven hundred people in attendance.[4] A number of questions, theological and practical, were on the program. The main questions, however, were related to the controversies surrounding the atonement and the communion

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[1] Ibid., p. 1527. [2] Ibid., pp. 1528-29.

[3] Ibid., pp. 1529-36. [4] Ibid., pp. 1537-41.

service. As a result of this meeting, a committee was appointed to draft a plan for a new congregational order "in harmony with the word of God," and to plan for the founding of a seminary for the training of ministers. Elected to the membership on this committee were: Lector P. Waldenström, Rector A. Falk, Curate E. J. Ekman, Dr. E. Nystrom, C. J. Nyvall, lay preacher; and, as alternates,[1] Dr. A. B. Beskow and Sven Jonsson, a merchant. Here we have the framework of a new organization, the Mission Covenant.

The new committee was authorized to draft a letter to the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation with a request for:

(a) Brotherly coöperation between the Foundation and the friends of missions in the nation, in order to be able to utilize the talents that the Foundation had not desired to use, because they had been unwilling to accept the Augsburg Confession in all of its parts;

(b) a change in the constitution of the Foundation which would enable the Foundation to send out such missionaries about whose life in Christ, love to Christ and zeal for the bringing of souls to Christ, we are convinced, even though they cannot, in all of its parts, accept on oath the Augsburg Confession.[2]

Finally, the committee was asked to plan a free Swedish ecumenical meeting in addition to a ministers' meeting for the following year.[3]

In a letter to the Evangelical Foundation, the committee expressed regret that the coöperation between the adherents of the free movements and the leaders of the Foundation had deteriorated. It regretted, further, the reactionary spirit of the Foundation and its increased anxiety to serve the church and the letter of the Augsburg Confession rather than the common Christian people who needed its unifying influence. It noted that as a result of this reactionary spirit, a great number of men who had planned foreign missionary work under the Foundation, but who could not because of inner conviction sign the Augsburg Confession, had been refused service under the Foundation.

In addition to the letter from the committee, a petition was also received by the Foundation from the Ansgariiföreningen, a district Society under the Foundation in Värmland. In this letter, a proposal was made for several changes in the constitution of the Foundation. No mention was made of the Augsburg Confession. The first paragraph of the constitution was altered to read:

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[1] Ibid., pp. 1541-43. [2] Ibid., p. 1543. [3] Ibid.

> The purpose and aim of the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation is to further, through the grace of God, the growth of the Kingdom of Christ, in which respect the Foundation will constitute a common point of union for the evangelical Christians of our land, and offer opportunity for all to contribute to the purpose and aim of the Foundation through personal work, pamphlets, gifts, wills, etc.[1]

There was to be no written confessional statement; only a personal testimony of personal fellowship with God from each member. Nothing was said of provincial delegates, for it was to be the delegates from each mission society to the annual meetings who would make decisions.[2]

In addition to these petitions for a more progressive attitude on behalf of the Foundation, there was also a personal letter from Waldenström. Waldenström, along with many others, had been dismissed as a provincial delegate to the Foundation because of his position on the doctrinal question of the atonement as well as for his appeal for a more liberal point of view in the work of the Foundation.[3] All of these appeals and petitions were rejected by the Foundation.

How delicate was the situation can best be seen in the answer of the Foundation to the petitions. The Foundation had been founded on the confession of the State Church, the Augsburg Confession. To that end it was within the framework of the Established Church and could maintain cordial relations with the church. In order to maintain this cordial relationship, it sought to avoid controversial questions. When the great theological discussion after 1872 threatened a schism within the church, the Foundation immediately reacted in favor of the church. Possibly, it recognized that to do otherwise would lead directly to separation from the church. Anderson notes that powerful influences were undoubtedly at work, influences directed by the church and seeking to aid its leaders in saving the Foundation for the church. For, says he,

> one single denomination alongside of the church would naturally be of greater significance than a number of small groups. Thus it was understandable that those interested in the church preferred to see a disintegration of the movement rather than a development of it in a more progressive direction.[4]

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[1] Anderson, op. cit., p. 74.

[2] Ibid., pp. 75-76.

[3] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1550-52.

[4] Anderson, op. cit., p. 77.

The reaction of the leaders of the Foundation touched on three points: the new theory of the atonement, the agitation for separate communion services,and the matter of abrogating the Augsburg Confession. As a result, provincial delegates who had been guilty of advocating any of these points were dismissed. Waldenström and many others of the provincial delegates fell victims to this reactionary spirit.[1] Students preparing for foreign missionary work under the Foundation were dismissed or were forced to leave because of a refusal to sign the Confession or of participation in separate communion services. Waldemar Rudin, Rector of the Foundation's Institute at Johannelund, was called before the Board because of his theological beliefs regarding the atonement and justification, and was saved from dismissal by the chairman's vote. He resigned his position and became a professor in the theological faculty of the University of Uppsala. A number of preachers, traveling colporteurs and missionaries were refused further service within the Foundation. A number of mission societies which had permitted and arranged private sacramental unions were expelled from membership. In short, all who in any way revealed a dissenting attitude from that of the leaders were severed from all connections with the Foundation.[2]

In vain the leaders of the free movement called attention to the fact that the Foundation, in spite of its Confession, had come into being with the understanding that it was to gather within its framework all Christians who desired to serve the common cause. They called attention to the fact that the Foundation itself was an expression of the victorious struggles for religious freedom, and was to serve as a point of union for all who had the furtherance of the kingdom of God at heart and were friends of a free evangelical work. Waldenström, in his final appeal to the leaders after his dismissal, set forth the principle that within the Foundation all Christians of different confessions and views could unite and pool all their resources to the winning of souls for Christ.[3] He favored some compromise that would enable them to co-

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[1] Ekman, op. cit., p. 1550.

[2] Ollen, op. cit., pp. 135-36.

[3] Ibid., p. 139.

operate, particularly in their foreign missionary work.

The leaders, in denying the various petitions for more freedom, professed their close adherence to the tenets of the constitution. The organization had been formed on the foundation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and its leaders felt an imperative need for something more tangible than a mere personal confession of faith. Moreover, they felt that their cordial relationship with the church would be ruptured if a new constitutional provision were accepted. They desired to continue the Foundation as a mission society, not as a denomination. They wanted to work not for separation from the church but for a reform within the church, and they could point to considerable progress in that direction. And, finally, they wanted to retain representation through provincial delegates rather than through delegates from each mission society. In their denial of the several petitions, we find that basically the questions revolve around the doctrine of atonement, the question of separate communion services, and the matter of the Augsburg Confession.[1] The following excerpt from their refusal of the petitions clarifies their position:

> In order to achieve the great goal of missions by the Foundation, it is certainly necessary that evangelical volunteer talents coöperate to that end; in this aim, therefore, the Foundation has sought to unite as many as possible. In doing this we have not, contrary to the assumption of your petition, thought that the Foundation should become a point of union for <u>all</u> free life movements in our country, but only for friends of missions belonging to the Lutheran confession. This limitation has not been made as a consequence of ignoring the truth that all believers are members in the same body and children in the same Father's house! It is invaluable that in private fellowship we can consider one another thus in spite of differences in less important questions. But when it comes to the execution of real work for the cause of missions and an orderly coöperation for such a purpose, the conditions become somewhat different. Here one constantly faces problems that easily cause disturbances. Certainly, it would be desirable if these would never occur. But experience shows that nothing else awaits us in the present condition of religious life among us. Therefore, it might be more useful for the kingdom of God not to seek to unite too many different elements within the circle.[2]

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[1]The best studies of this entire question are to be found in Ekman, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 1537-52; Anderson, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 69-86; Ollen, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 134-40.

[2]Ekman, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 1547.

Ollen in commenting on the attitude of the leaders of the Foundation says:

> They desired to gather some, but not all; they desired to go part of the way, but not all the way. They wanted to defend lay preaching because this was of constitutional importance for the work of the Foundation. But separate communion services they did not want to hear about, still less baptism performed by laymen. Mission societies which arranged for separate communion services were severed from any connection with the Foundation. Missionaries, missionary candidates, preachers, and provincial delegates who could not in every respect share the opinion of the Foundation regarding the Augsburg Confession were dismissed.[1]

Thus the "orthodox" and the "progressives" of the evangelical Christians had come to a parting of the ways, and the founding of the Swedish Covenant was the inevitable result.

As a result of the stand taken by the Foundation, a large number of lay preachers and mission workers were automatically cut off from service under the Foundation. In the meantime, the great revival movement continued to sweep the country, causing a demand for workers and preachers. The significance of this situation was clear to the ministerial conference that met in Stockholm in 1877. It will be recalled that this meeting organized and appointed a committee to seek a broader basis of work with the Foundation so as to provide a place within its framework for all dissenting Christian groups. This attempt, as we have seen, failed, and another meeting to discuss the situation was called at Stockholm in June, 1878.[2] Here were discussed proposals to engage the workers dismissed by the Foundation, and to establish schools for an educated ministry among the members of the free movement. Two schools were offered the meeting with certain stipulations. The offers were accepted and a committee was appointed to work out the necessary details of transfer and to formulate the rules of these educational institutions. Another meeting was called for July 30-August 2, with the expectation that the committee would then be ready to report.[3]

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[1] Ollen, op. cit., pp. 135-36.

[2] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1552-56. Lektor P. M. Elmblad, a former chairman of the Executive Board of the Foundation, was chosen chairman.

[3] Ibid.

This second general and ministerial meeting was held in the Bethel Church in Stockholm with about 200 delegates in attendance, in addition to some 400 auditors.[1] The meeting consisted of provincial delegates, as well as delegates from the independent mission societies. There was a fear that many of the provincial delegates, because of loyalty to the Foundation and hope of a possible rapprochement, would oppose the foundation of a new organization. That would mean that all attempts at a more progressive work by the dissenters would be crushed. At a meeting of delegates from the independent mission societies on August 2, 1878, a motion to organize under the name of Svenska missionsförbundet, The Swedish Mission Covenant, was unanimously adopted. The decision was followed by a spontaneous service of prayer and praise. The leading spirit in this organizational meeting was Erick Jakob Ekman, curate at the parish of Ockelbo, who was also elected President of the new organization. Waldenström was absent, for with many others he still hoped that the leaders of the Foundation would acquiesce in the request for a broader base which would make coöperation possible. When informed of the momentous decision, he interpreted it as an inevitable acquiescence to the will of God.[2]

The Swedish Mission Covenant was not founded upon a new or special doctrinal approach. It was founded on the belief that all who exercise faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, are one, that each conscience has a god-given right of freedom, and that the spirit of unity ought to be demonstrated before the world in an atmosphere of equality and freedom. It was founded to answer the intolerance and bigotry which limited the Christian man's religious freedom and exposed him unduly to the legislative powers of church and state. It was founded in answer to the new political and religious demands of the day.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 1556-57. For a full discussion, see also Anderson, op. cit., pp. 86-90.

[2] Ekman, op. cit., pp. 1559-60.

PART II. COVENANT BEGINNINGS IN AMERICA

CHAPTER VII

THE BACKGROUND OF SWEDISH IMMIGRATION

The incorporation of the last Swedish church on the Delaware into the Anglican church in 1846 closes the first chapter in the story of Swedish religious and secular influence in America.[1] It is largely a story of gradual retrenchment and loss of influence by the mother church in Sweden, a retrenchment that was hastened by the cessation of Swedish immigration, and which culminated in a complete severance when the former colonial churches were taken over by the Protestant Episcopal Church of America. The political influence of the Swedish state church had extended only from the founding of the colony of New Sweden in 1638 to its seizure by the Dutch in 1655.[2] It was not until 1789, however, that the State church withdrew officially from the affairs of the Swedish churches in Delaware.[3] And by the time of the incorporation in 1846, the State church influence had completely ceased. Long before the end of that chapter, however, the first wave of Swedish immigration, which had its original impulse in colonial

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[1] Jehu Curtis Clay, Annals of the Swedes on Delaware, (2d ed.; Philadelphia: Hooker and Co., 1858), pp. 140-43, 157. Compare Clay's statement with George Ryden, "The Five 'Old Swedes' Churches on the Delaware River," Augustana Quarterly, XVII (July, 1938), 203-04.

[2] The best study of the early years of the Delaware colony is Amandus Johnson's The Swedish Settlement on the Delaware (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1911). 2 vols. Israel Acrelius, A History of New Sweden, or the Settlement on the Delaware River. Translated and supplied with an introduction and notes by William M. Reynolds (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1874), is also an authoritative account of the story.

[3] Clay, op. cit., pp. 128-29, 134-35. See also George Ryden, "The Five 'Old Swedes' Churches on the Delaware River," Augustana Quarterly, XVII (July, 1938), 198, 203-04. For a brief account see J. J. Conrad Bergendoff, "The Swedish Church on the Delaware," Church History. Vol. VII. The American Publication of Church History, 1938, pp. 215-30.

times, had completely spent itself. Our major concern in this inquiry focuses upon religious development arising from the second wave of Swedish immigration about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Several factors accounted for this renewed interest in the western hemisphere. In 1768 a Swedish law was enacted which required every emigrant to give bond for his return to his native land. Since many were unable to meet this condition, this law created a strong barrier against emigration.[1] With the repeal of the more extreme features of this law in 1840, a considerable obstacle to emigration was removed. Simultaneously, much favorable publicity was given to the great Western country. Gustaf Unonius, who with his family was among the first to take advantage of the revised law, tells in his letters how he carefully read the available books about American travel.[2] He, in turn, was to exercise great influence through letters published and widely read in the Swedish press.[3] The words of Unonius, and many others, excited the adventurous spirit of a people already known for "wanderlust." Other factors of a more tangible kind were the widespread objection to compulsory military training[4] and dissatisfaction

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[1]Ernst Beckman, Amerikanska Studier (Stockholm, 1883), p. 157.

[2]He had been greatly impressed by Carl von Hauswolff's Teckningar utur sällskapslivet i Nordamerikas Förenta Stater (Translated from the German), Alexis de Tocqueville's Democracy in America, Frances M. Trollope's Domestic Manners in the Americas; he had also read C. D. Arvidson's Förenta Staterna och Canada åren 1832, 1833, 1834, Carl August Gosselman's Resa i Norra Amerika, till upplysning och nytta för dem som ämna dit utflytta; samt emigrant-föreningens stadgar och förslager för en tillämnad utflyttning år 1841. See George M. Stephenson, "Letters Relating to Gustaf Unonius and the Early Settlers in Wisconsin," Translated and edited by Stephenson in Augustana Historical Society Publication, Vol. VII, Rock Island, Illinois, 1937. See introduction, pp. 9-11.

[3]Ibid., p. 11. See also George M. Stephenson, "When America Was the Land of Canaan," Minnesota History (St. Paul: 1929), pp. 237-60. Most of these letters were published in Aftonbladet.

[4]Oscar Fritiof Ander, T. N. Hasselquist, The Career and Influence of a Swedish-American Clergyman, Journalist and Educator. Augustana Library Publication No. 14, Rock Island, Illinois. This work will be cited, Ander, Hasselquist. Ander here quotes Svenska Tribunen, October 22, 1884, p. 15.

with the lack of political freedom.[1] Economic motivation was also present. Eighty per cent of the Swedish population lived in rural districts as an agricultural proletariat and constituted a class of landless agrarians.[2] The crop failures in the early "fifties" and "sixties" wrought great havoc among this section of the population.[3] It has been stated that the entire period of emigration was one of economic readjustment.[4] Stephenson in correlating the causes which set in motion and accelerated the migration from Sweden during the years 1850-1875 advances the view that the immigrants were non-conformists in political, social, economic, and religious matters.[5] Certainly in the light of the conditions and events which set the tide of immigration into motion, economic factors take on significant proportions.

In the religious field, there was considerable dissatisfaction with the Established Church. Many felt that the Church was too worldly, too tainted with French agnosticism and atheism to be able to perform its Christian mission. Moreover, the Conventicle Law of 1726 forbidding private house gatherings of the Pietists was still in effect, giving rise to tensions which provoke mass emigration.

> Dissenters brought persecution, persecution brought indignation, indignation brought agitation, and agitation brought reforms--and also emigration.[6]

Basically the dissenters were struggling for freedom, an ideal which repeatedly found expression in their controversies. To them, America was gradually becoming known as the land of religious

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[1]Ander, op. cit., citing Svenskarna i Amerika, I, 204; also Hemlandet, April 29, 1885.

[2]Florence E. Janson, The Background of Swedish Immigration 1840-1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 84.

[3]Ibid., pp. 22-275.

[4]Gustaf Sundberg, Sweden, Its People and Its Industry, Historical and statistical handbook published by the order of the government (Stockholm: 1904), p. 132.

[5]George M. Stephenson, "The Background of the Beginnings of Swedish Immigration, 1850-1875," The American Historical Review, XXX (July, 1926), 708-23.

[6]Ibid.

freedom, a land where great liberalizing influences were in operation, and where a complete separation of Church and State existed. Religious freedom became a topic of discussion and assumed a more tangible form when "the Society for the Advancement of Religious Freedom" was organized in Stockholm in 1851[1] and the Evangelisk Kyrkovän began publication to promote its cause. Its editor, Hans Birger Hammar, in a series of persuasive articles diagnosed the decadent spiritual state in general and deplored the merging of spiritual and temporal power in the State Church. Hammar was an outspoken enthusiast for a Lutheran free church in Sweden.[2]

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGIOUS WORK AMONG THE SWEDES IN AMERICA

Among the first to migrate to America were the adherents of Eric Jansson, leader of a pietistic movement in the Northland during the decades 1830-1850. In the early stages of this movement, Jansson and his followers were Readers of Luther as well as of the Pietists, Arndt, Nohrborg and Murbeck. Finally, however, Jansson proclaimed himself as the only "true" preacher since the days of the Apostles. His polemics against church and government became increasingly bitter.[1] Opposed and persecuted by the constituted order, he migrated with his followers to America. There they founded a communistic colony named Bishops Hill, in Illinois which is said to have included about 1500 persons. The arrival of Jansson created a religious tension in a community where many Swedes had already settled and founded a permanent religious structure of their own, the first since the days of the Delaware colony. The members of Jansson's colony were in constant conflict with other religious groups, especially with the Methodists and Lutherans. The colony gradually disintegrated during the decade following the assassination of its founder in 1850.[2]

In 1825 O. G. Hedström, a young man of twenty-two years of age, had arrived in New York, where he was converted to Methodism by the woman who later became his wife. Visiting in Sweden in 1833, he persuaded his brother to embrace the Methodist faith and to ac-

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[1]For a complete treatment of this cult in Sweden see Ekman, Den Inre Historien, pp. 802-24; also History of the Swedes of Illinois, edited by Ernest W. Olson in collaboration with Anders Dahon and Martin J. Engberg (Chicago: Engberg-Holmberg Publishing Co., 1908), pp. 197-223.

[2]For a full study of the colony, see M. A. Mikkelsen, "The Bishop Hill Colony," John Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, January, 1892, edited by Herbert B. Adams. Also Emil Herlenius, Erik Jansismens Historia (Jönköping: 1900). See also History of the Swedes in Illinois, pp. 223-70.

company him on his return to New York. In the spring of 1845, Hedström founded the North River Mission for Scandinavian sailors. Shortly after, he also founded a large Methodist church, and began a notable work among Scandinavian immigrants on the Bethel-Ship in New York Harbor. He exercised a unique influence among his countrymen during a ministry of thirty years.[1] The Bethel-Ship became the center of lively revival work among sailors and emigrants.[2] From New York the stream of immigrants was directed westward. The following quotation gives the importance and scope of his ministry:

> He exerted a very great influence upon the course Swedish Immigration took in this country. It was directly through his influence that Victoria, Illinois, received such a large share of settlers in the later forties, an event which gave the direction to Swedish migration for a decade more.[3]

Meanwhile, Hedström's brother, Jonas, had travelled west to Victoria, Illinois, where, in 1839, he became a Methodist preacher and a zealous propagator of this faith, as a travelling preacher and circuit rider. By the end of 1846 he had established there a Swedish Methodist congregation.[4] Later he came into sharp conflict with the Erik Janssonists and was accused of having sought to win them to Methodism.[5] The same conflict arose with the Lutherans and Baptists. Despite opposing forces, the progress of Method-

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[1] The Twenty-seventh Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1846, p. 94. See also E. Norelius, De Svenska Lutherska Församlingarnes och Svenskarnas Historia in Amerika. 2 vols. (Rock Island: Lutheran Augustana Book Concern, 1890), I, 1, 15-20. This work will hereafter be referred to as Norelius, Historia.

[2] "As in all past time, the 'revival' commencing in the 'Ship' in 1845, has continued and was never more aflame than at this writing. Scarcely a single week in the history of this mission has passed without new creations [conversions]--of sinners 'born again'." Fifty-fifth Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1872, p. 144.

[3] Iowa Journal of Historical and Political Science, October, 1905, p. 591.

[4] History of the Swedes in Illinois, op. cit., pp. 356-59.

[5] "Letter from J. J. Hedström till L. P. Esbjörn," Emigranterna och Kyrkan, Brev från och till svenskar i Amerika, 1849-1892. Edited and supplied with an introduction by Gunnar Westin (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1932), pp. 33-37.

ism among the Swedish settlers was continuous. In 1856, at the conference held in Peoria, Illinois, all the Swedish Methodist churches in Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa were combined into one district with Jonas Hedström as its presiding elder. By the time of his death in 1859, he had established the Swedish Methodist Church on a solid foundation. Like his brother, he reported great revivals in spite of the discouraging influence of "the deep-rooted formalities of the old, dead state Church of Sweden."[1]

In 1840, Gustaf Unonius, a young Uppsala student together with his wife, led a small party of immigrants to America and established the first Swedish colony at Pine Lake, Wisconsin.[2] J. Lloyd Breck, an Episcopal missionary in Wisconsin, urged upon him the wisdom of affiliating himself with his church and stressed the similarity between the Episcopal Church and the Church of Sweden. Unonius thereupon began Episcopal religious services among the Scandinavians. When Norwegians and Swedes urged him to seek ordination and become their pastor, Unonius entered the Episcopal seminary at Nashotah to prepare for the ministry. Said he:

> I thought it more than doubtful that ministers from Sweden would ever come. If I could have foreseen that eventuality, it is entirely possible that my decision would have been different.[3]

In 1845 he was ordained an Episcopal clergyman and started work among the Scandinavians in Wisconsin, Illinois,and Iowa. Moving to Chicago in 1849, he established the first Swedish Episcopal church, St. Ansgarius, with aid secured from Americans and from the singer Jenny Lind.[4] It was in this connection that the great struggle began between Unonius and the leaders of the Swedish Lutheran pastors as to whether the Episcopal or the Lutheran church in America represented the Swedish State Church.

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[1] Thirty-third Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1852, p. 64. There is a very sympathetic treatment of Hedström by Norelius in his Historia I, 15-26.

[2] Gustaf Unonius, Minnen från en sjuttonarig vistelse i nordvestra Amerika (Uppsala, 1861), I, 1-12. Henceforth this informative work will be cited as Minnen.

[3] Ibid.

[4] George M. Stephenson, Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration. A Study of Immigrant Churches (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1932), p. 201. This excellent work

> The Lutheran church was divided into several mutually hostile synods, each departing more or less from the Augsburg Confession or at least at variance in the interpretation of it. With church set against church, and pastor disputing pastor, Unonius experienced the same confusion that confounded Esbjörn. He learned that the General Synod had a strong strain of Calvinism, and he could hardly consider going into the strongly nationalistic German synods. . . . .[1]

In a letter to Carl Fredrick af Wingård, Archbishop of Sweden, Unonius stated his problem and asked for a definite statement of clarification concerning the relationship of his church with that of the Episcopalians. The reply was disappointing. Wingard termed his affiliation with the Episcopalians a downfall (nedfall) if not a backsliding (avfall).[2] Left to make his own decision, Unonius chose to remain with the Episcopalians. His own understanding of the relationship obtaining between the two historic churches is reflected in the constitution of the St. Ansgarius Church which subscribed to the "apostolic faith and communion, under episcopal jurisdiction, as it is sanctioned and preserved in our native land."[3] This undefined relationship created difficulties. Unonius soon clashed with the Lutheran pastors who arrived from Sweden. These men, Lars P. Esbjörn, T. N. Hasselquist, and Erland Carlsson, saw in Unonius an impostor who worked under the disguise of a Lutheran minister. Unonius, on the other

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will hereafter be referred to as Religious Aspects. . . . .

[1] Ibid. [2] Unonius, Minnen, II, 59.

[3] Ibid., II, 42-44, 338-41; see also Norelius, Historia, I, 1-14. While still at the seminary, Unonius in the latter part of 1844 or the early part of 1845 engaged the services of P. W. Böckman, a Swedish clergyman who had come to the Pine Lake settlement. Thus, Böckman is really the first Swedish Lutheran minister in America in the second period of immigration. Unonius speaks of him very critically, and Norelius quite approvingly. Possibly Böckman's character was not above approach for after an examination into his character, he was refused the opportunity of service in America under the auspices of the Swedish Missionary Society in accordance with arrangements made by Dr. P. Fjellstedt. Thus Böckman's travels were financed by private individuals. His work among the Scandinavians proved a failure according to Unonius. It is now quite well established that Böckman was a läsare pastor, and Unonius appears to have been a complete stranger to the spirit of the läsare or readers. Hence he may have been somewhat prejudiced. At any rate, Böckman returned to Sweden, sometime prior to 1849. In that year he published a booklet entitled För christna, en christelig almanack för det högre lifvet. He died the following year.

hand, insisted that he represented the true sister church of the Swedish State Church, that these pastors were not genuine Lutherans, and that the Synod of Northern Illinois to which they belonged was not truly Lutheran since it had not accepted the unaltered Augsburg Confession.[1] And so the controversy raged.

> Unonius knew nothing of the läsare spirit that Esbjörn, Hasselquist, and Carlsson had imbibed, because he had not come under its influence, although he had taken some part in the temperance agitation. Unonius was correct in maintaining that his church was more like the Church of Sweden in spirit and practice than the Swedish Lutheran church in America.[2]

The St. Ansgarius congregation suffered heavily through the inroads made by the Lutheran Immanuel Church in Chicago under the leadership of the Rev. Erland Carlsson. Swedish immigrants flocked far more readily to a church bearing the Lutheran name than to one bearing a Protestant Episcopal designation. In 1858, Unonius resigned his pastorate and returned to Sweden.[3] Because of the great service he had rendered during his stay in America in spite of the controversies in which he became involved, he had, nevertheless, earned for himself an important place in the history of the Swedish people in America. As a true representative of the idea of the Episcopal high church, he had failed to understand the spirit of the immigrants who were largely of southern Swedish pietistic sentiments, and later of the low church Rosenian type. For these immigrants the question of the apostolic succession, the altar and the sacraments, were not of paramount importance. They were believers in an individual conversion experience and were satisfied if the preacher were a layman who read and

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[1]The Synod of Northern Illinois had not accepted the unaltered Augsburg Confession prior to 1854.

[2]Stephenson, op. cit., p. 202.

[3]From his own words we learn that Unonius was never quite sure that he did the best thing in resigning his church and position as Swedish and Norwegian Vice Consul. He speaks of two mistakes which he had made in his life. The first one was that he had emigrated to America, and the second that he ever left it. In Sweden he sought unsuccessfully to enter the ministry of the State Church. He was, however, voted a gratuity and afterwards appointed surveyor of customs at Grisslehamn. See Unonius, op. cit., II, 612-21; also "Letters Relating to Gustaf Unonius," translated and edited by G. M. Stephenson, in Augustana Historical Society Publication, Vol. VII, Introduction.

prayed in a small conventicle meeting.[1]

A far more important and far-reaching phase of religious work among the Swedes in America was to be initiated by Swedish Lutheran pastors. Our study of the beginnings of the "Mission Friends" or of the Evangelical Mission Covenant brings us unavoidably into intimate contact with the beginnings of the Swedish Lutheran movement in America. For a considerable length of time the two movements run parallel. The Mission Friends or the Mission Covenanters came from the Lutheran fold and were in all respects Lutheran in their faith. They separated themselves from the Lutherans gradually and often after great and painful struggles. In this respect their position was considerably different from that of the Swedish Methodists and Baptists. While these sects in Sweden also originated within the Lutheran faith, their separation was sharper and more pronounced because it arose from a doctrinal difference of opinion. It was the Reformed against the Lutheran doctrine. And as adherents of the Reformed doctrine they emerged in a much more complete state than did the Mission Friends, who evolved much more gradually. They had their origin, not in a doctrinal controversy, but in a struggle for freedom of conscience and of soul--a struggle for religious freedom and independence. Their early leaders were members in good standing in the Swedish State Church and, for the most part, supporters of the Evangelical Fatherland Foundation. As immigrants in the New World they were generally members of the Swedish Lutheran churches. Within these churches they gradually appeared in the spirit of "New Lutherans." After the founding of the Augustana Synod, they appear in the role of dissenters, protesting against the reactionary spirit which followed upon the founding of that

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[1]The entire Augustana Synod was from the beginning built upon the views of the low church. Not only was the idea of ordination by bishops broken, but the entire government was founded on the representative system of conference and synod, which is Presbyterian. Moreover the letters. . . . .give information regarding the type of piety in the growing Swedish-American Lutheranism. One notices that the exchange of letters go almost exclusively to the men of the revival type in Sweden: the men in the Fatherland Foundation, the low church men of southern Sweden, and the semi-pietistic theological faculty at Uppsala during the years 1870-1880. Westin, Emigranterna och kyrkan, p. 14, note 19.

strictly confessional synod. In doctrine they were in agreement with their pastors, but in regard to the order within the church they expressed ideas not in harmony with the prevailing opinion of the Swedish Lutheran State Church. They believed in revival and prayer meetings, greater freedom from dogmatism and set form of worship, and in restricting membership to believers. They protested against the indiscriminate participation of believers and "unbelievers"[1] in the Lord's Supper. Their conviction on these and other points was undoubtedly strengthened by the great revival movements that were sweeping the country. The dissenting movement finally became a crusade for religious freedom of conscience and spirit of the individual within the church. During the "eighties" the number of these Mission Friends was augmented by the arrival from Sweden of <u>läsare</u> and Mission Friends who had accepted the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement. From this time on the movement grew as a result of the doctrinal controversy that raged in the Swedish Lutheran churches with regard to the new interpretation. Thus, much of the history of the Evangelical Mission Covenant is also the history of the Swedish Lutheran churches and the Augustana Synod in America.

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[1] Members who had accepted the confessional requirements, but were unable to testify to a personal conversion experience.

CHAPTER IX

THE EARLY SWEDISH LUTHERAN PASTORS IN AMERICA IN THE SECOND PERIOD OF IMMIGRATION

The first Lutheran pastor to settle in America in the new epoch of immigration was Lars P. Esbjörn, who had served as a curate at Östervåla and later as chaplain on the estate of Oslättfors, near Hille in Hälsingland.[1] Esbjörn was a Pietist of the Hedbergian type.[2] He had been in close contact with George Scott, and after the disturbance at the English Chapel which forced Scott to leave Sweden, he wrote Scott begging him not to desert his poverty-stricken fatherland. In this connection he speaks of "us läsare pastors." He was also much interested in the temperance movement in Sweden, largely inaugurated by Scott and wholeheartedly supported by Dr. Peter Wieselgren. As a läsare pastor he compiled a book of devotional melodies based on P. H. Syren's pietist hymnal; he also translated Johan Arndt's and certain English works into Swedish. He was a clergyman with definite free-church tendencies.[3]

Through "America letters," Esbjörn had been informed of the activity of Jonas Hedström, the Methodist missionary in Illinois. Consequently he wrote Hedström for information concerning the prospects of religious work among the Swedes and about the possibility of being supported by the Swedish Missionary Society.

Concerning his motive for leaving Sweden, Esbjörn himself

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[1] Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . . ., pp. 150-51.

[2] The Hedbergians are so named after a Finnish pastor, Franse G. Hedberg, a New Reader who opposed the new catechism of 1810, and the hymnals of 1811 and 1819 because he thought that he detected in them traces of neology and the doctrine of good works as a means of salvation. Finally Hedberg went so far as to advocate separation of Church and State. See Jesper Holmquist, "Några blad ur läseriets historia," Korsbaneret (Rock Island: 1920). Also Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 27-28.

[3] Stephenson, op. cit.

has this to say:

> . . . .when after the Erik Jansson emigration of 1846 many Swedes during the following years migrated to the New World without a pastor, I found myself challenged to move there in order to be of spiritual service for them, that they and their children might not degenerate into heathendom or be pulled into some of the numberless, more or less heretical sects in this land. I was also exhorted to take this step by countrymen who had migrated and were bitterly complaining about their spiritual need.[1]

Westin, however, calls attention to his letters which breathe a spirit of disappointment regarding promotion at home.[2]

In due time, Esbjörn received Hedström's answer inviting him to share in God's work in the new land.[3] The Society promised traveling expenses, and after some controversies with the Archbishop af Wingård,[4] Esbjörn with his family and a party of one hundred and forty set sail for America. Arriving at New York, he met Olof G. Hedström. Esbjörn had hoped to obtain some support for his work from the Methodists whom he knew through George Scott and his work in Sweden.[5] Informed by Hedström of the requirement of Methodist membership in order to receive aid, Esbjörn through the mediating efforts of Robert Baird, a Presbyterian clergyman and ardent advocate of the Evangelical Alliance for the Protestant world, turned to the American Home Missionary Society.[6] Here he

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[1] L. P. Esbjörn, "De svenska Lutherska församlingarna i N. Amerika uppkomst," Korsbaneret, 1885, Rock Island, Illinois, p. 33. The quotation is part of an address by Esbjörn at the convocation of the ministers at Uppsala diocese in June, 1865.

[2] Westin, Emigranterna och Kyrkan, p. 17. Cf. letter by J. J. Hedström to L. P. Esbjörn, pp. 33 ff.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid., see letters from C. Fr. af Wingård to L. P. Esbjörn, pp. 37-39.

[5] Esbjörn is said to have manifested strong sympathies for Methodism and "unions" during his first years in America. Indeed, the statement is made that it was his wife who dissuaded him from affiliating with the Methodist Church. Cf. Norelius, Historia, I, 34-35.

[6] Paul Van Dyke, "Robert Baird," Dictionary of American Biography. Edited by Allen Johnson. 21 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), I, 511-12. A Presbyterian minister, Baird was at one time general agent of the American Sunday School Union. As such he was responsible for the founding of one thousand Sunday schools in places where no churches existed. In 1834 he was sent

received financial assistance without being committed to any doctrinal position.[1]

Already in 1850 Esbjörn was able to organize Lutheran churches in Andover and Galesburg, Illinois, and soon after in Rock Island and Moline.[2] Soon, his church, especially at Andover, was to be harassed by the inroads made by the Janssonists, the Methodists, and the Baptists, the first two groups having been in the field before his arrival.[3]

Shortly afterwards, other Lutheran ministers from Sweden joined Esbjörn in the work among Swedish immigrants. Among these were T. N. Hasselquist, Erland Carlson, and Erik Norelius. In the fall of 1852, Hasselquist came from southern Sweden, where he had been an assistant pastor in Åkarp and Vittsjö. He, like Esbjörn, received financial aid from the American Home Missionary Association. Norelius describes him as "a mild Schartauan who gradually came to a more evangelical view of Christianity."[4] Hasselquist, like Esbjörn, was a Pietist. He had become known in Sweden as a revival preacher and it was in this role that he came to America. Accepting a call to the little church at Galesburg, Illinois, a church exposed to the proselyting efforts of the Janssonists, Methodists, and Episcopalians, Hasselquist allowed himself con-

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abroad as agent of the French Association, an organization which gave active support to the Protestant Church in France. While in Paris, he worked for a movement in Europe similar to the Temperance Society and its affiliated organizations. At the request of the American ambassador in Paris, he wrote his Histoire des Sociétés de Temperance des Etats Unis d'Amérique (Paris, 1836), which was translated into German and Swedish. When the French Association developed into the American and Foreign Christian Union, Baird remained in its service and became one of its great leaders.

[1]Norelius censures Esbjörn for accepting financial aid from such an anti-Lutheran society as the American Home Missionary Society and states that while economic pressure was the immediate reason for requesting aid, the more basic reason was his own uncertainty and vagueness in fundamental matters at this time. He had not as yet, he says, become able to distinguish between Puritanism and Calvinism on the one hand and pure Lutheranism on the other. Norelius, Historia, I, 140-42.

[2]L. P. Esbjorn, "De svenska Lutherska Församlingarna i Amerika Uppkomst," Korsbaneret, 1885, p. 37.

[3]Ibid., pp. 33-34.

[4]Norelius, Historia, I, 242.

siderable liberty in his services and methods of work. It is reported that at the Sunday morning services as he passed up the aisle dressed in a white linen coat, he would often sing one of Ahnfeldt's songs in which the congregation then would join him. He ignored the ritual, going directly to the pulpit. In the pulpit he was very informal. Often he would break into song in the midst of the sermon and then continue preaching.[1] While Hasselquist may have exercised much of this freedom as a concession to those who opposed anything that savoured of the old state church order, it is equally true that Hasselquist as a Pietist disliked many of the expressions of the state church. After eighteen years' experience with the free church he wrote:

> For my part I cannot love the state church. It is most certainly inconsistent with both the Word of God and all experience.[2]

However, in succeeding years Hasselquist became more conservative and zealous for the forms of the church. Why this change? The author of the jubilee pamphlet suggests that experience changed him.[3] Stephenson presents a more thorough analysis:

> Pressure from brother pastors in his own church, dissension within his own congregations between liberals and conservatives, and attacks from the Mission Friends caused him to modify his point of view somewhat. . . . .[4]

The third among the early Swedish Lutheran pastors was Erland Carlson, who was called to the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago. The first Lutheran church had been organized there by the Germans in 1846, and by that time a number of Scandinavians had settled in the city. A congregation was formed under

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[1] First Lutheran Church--Ninetieth Anniversary (1851-1941) of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Galesburg, Illinois, p. 28. See also Oscar Fritiof Ander, T. N. Hasselquist. Norelius ventures the opinion that Hasselquist's liberalism was due to the influence of the Congregationalists whom he met in Galesburg, E. Norelius, T. N. Hasselquist. Lefnadsteckning (Rock Island, Illinois, 1900), pp. 52-53.

[2] Ibid. See also Rätta Hemlandet och Augustana, October, 1870.

[3] Ninetieth Anniversary of the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Galesburg, Illinois, p. 28.

[4] Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . . ., p. 169; see also Erik Norelius, T. N. Hasselquist, Lefnadsteckning, pp. 52-54.

the leadership of a Gustaf Smith, an adventurer who posed as an ordained clergyman. Realizing he was under suspicion, he fled with the church funds.[1] At this point the Norwegians turned to Paul Andersen, a student of Beloit College, and invited him to be their pastor. Andersen was ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Franchean Synod in 1848 and assumed the pastorate that year. His work, however, appears to have been mainly among the Norwegians.[2] Many Swedes had left the congregation after the Smith episode. The Swedish immigrants thereupon turned to Gustaf Unonius, the Swedish Episcopal minister,[3] under whose leadership the aforementioned St. Ansgarius Church was formed in Chicago.[4] Thus by 1850 there were two Scandinavian churches in Chicago, both laying claim to the Lutheran inheritance. As a rule, however, the Norwegians joined Andersen's congregation and the Swedes Unonius' while a constant controversy raged as to which was the more Lutheran of the two.[5] The historian records how anxious Andersen was to have a Swedish Lutheran church established, realizing that many joined the St. Ansgarius congregation in the belief that they were joining a Lutheran church. This opportunity presented itself when Hasselquist arrived from Sweden and stopped in Chicago in 1852[6] while on his way to Galesburg. Andersen implored Hasselquist to return and form a congregation among the Swedes. Hasselquist did so in January, 1853, when a congregation called the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Congregation was organized with eighty charter members.[7] Consequently, Hasselquist wrote Dr. Fjellstedt to send a qualified pastor to the new congregation. Dr. Fjellstedt chose Erland Carlsson, a minister in the Swedish State Church.[8] Carlsson,

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[1]Norelius, ibid, I, 367. See also "Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Immanuels Församlingen i Chicago, Illinois," Korsbaneret, 1881, pp. 73-75.

[2]Ibid., pp. 75-78.

[3]Ibid., see also Unonius, Minnen, I, 1-12.

[4]Unonius, Minnen, II, 42-44, 338-41. See also "Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Immanuels-Församlingen i Chicago, Illinois," Korsbaneret, 1881, pp. 76-78.

[5]Ibid. [6]Ibid. [7]Ibid., p. 80.

[8]Ibid., pp. 82-83.

like Esbjörn and Hasselquist, left Sweden because of dissatisfaction with the state church and his slight chances of promotion because of his pietistic attitude. A graduate of the University of Lund, he had read Schartau, Rosenius, and Nohrborg; moreover, he had been under the influence of the Sellergren revival.[1] Stephenson says that he was "more churchly than Hasselquist." He also adds:

> His activity in the temperance movement had brought him into conflict with the bishop of Växiö and others in the consistory, and in consequence he had been shifted from one congregation to another and had never risen above the rank of curate. This experience probably made him listen more readily to the call from America, which was extended him through Fjellstedt.[2]

This view is further supported in another commentary on Pastor Carlsson.

> Because of his consecration and the power of his message, he soon made himself felt. . . . .Some of the leaders were not friendly to this manifestation. They called it "pietism" and 'fanaticism.' Dr. Carlsson before long drew their attention. They took petty measures against him, but the people held him in even greater esteem, and gave him a still more responsive hearing. The attitude of the church leaders no doubt in a measure was the cause for his accepting the call to Chicago. But only in a measure, for the real cause lay deeper. As we have seen, he was filled with intense missionary zeal.[3]

Erland Carlsson was born in Elghult, Småland, August 24, 1822. After graduating from Lund University, he was ordained in Växiö in June, 1849, and had been a minister for fourteen years when he arrived in America, August 13, 1853, with a party of 176 emigrants.[4] For twenty-two years Pastor Carlsson was to minister to the Swedish Lutherans in Chicago and was to become one of the

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[1] Pastor Lorenz Sellergren was a prominent evangelistic minister in Sweden under whose ministry revivals had been kindled in various parts of Sweden.

[2] Stephenson, Religious Aspects, p. 171.

[3] The story of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Published in connection with the Seventy-fifth Anniversary celebration of the Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Church of Chicago, January 8, 16, 1928. See also Minnes-Skrift, 1853-1903, utgiven av Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Immanuels-församlingen i Chicago, Illinois.

[4] "Pastor Erland Carlsson," Korsbaneret, 1881, pp. 67-72.

greatest leaders within the church.[1] On the first page of the Church Record he inscribed the motto that was to be his guide through life. "Relying upon divine assistance I am determined to declare the truth openly and faithfully, whatever difficulties may be thrown in my way."[2]

We have traced the religious attitude of the first Lutheran pastors in the second phase of immigration: Esbjörn, Hasselquist, and Carlson. These men were Pietists and, in the beginning, revivalists. They believed and preached a personal conversion experience. To their number should be added two other Swedish clergymen who wielded a great influence in their day, namely, Jonas Swenson and O. C. T. Andrén,[3] the former a graduate of Uppsala and the latter of Lund. Both were deeply spiritual men who came to the New World through the influence of Dr. Fjellstedt. With the exception of Esbjörn, who came from northern Sweden, all these men came from southern Sweden where a revival spirit had prevailed. All of them carried the revival spirit with them in their work among the immigrants.[4]

In addition to this group we will mention one of the many who were later to be educated in the schools of America and ordained by the Synod of Northern Illinois. His name is Eric Norelius, a native of Hälsingeland, the same province from which Esbjörn hailed. Norelius came with a party of Hedbergians, a

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[1]There is a rather complete biography of Carlsson and of the history of the Immanuel Church in Korsbaneret, 1881, pp. 67-126, as well as in Nils Forsander, Lifsbilder ur Augustana-synodens historia (Rock Island, 1915).

[2]This motto is quoted in Korsbaneret, loc. cit., p. 83.

[3]Norelius, Historia, pp. 186-225, 271, 366.

[4]"All of them could really be spoken of as 'läsare' priests. They were men in complete agreement with the movement for religious freedom in Sweden. An Esbjörn had been brought into close contacts with Pietism and the cause of temperance through his relations with George Scott and P. Wieselgren. All of them reflected the religious conditions in the homeland and all of them had come under the influence of Pietism and from the ranks of the common people. All of them seemingly made it a point that their churches present as little similarity as possible to the State Church of Sweden. Thus in all essentials each congregation was autonomous. Nor was there any thought at that time to establish an independent synod nor effect any organic alliance with the Church of Sweden." Quoted from a Lutheran leader, C. J. Bengtson, "Ett sjuttiofemårsminne," Korsbaneret (Rock Island, 1925), pp. 7-15.

branch of the old Readers of Norrland, who emphasized regeneration through baptism and desired to retain the use of the "old books"[1] discarded by the state church. Norelius was not a Pietist but a Symbolist or Confessionalist due to the influences he had been subjected to at Capital University in Ohio, an institution under the joint Synod of Ohio. As pastor, teacher, editor, and in due time synodical president, Norelius was to wield a great influence in shaping the destiny of Swedish Lutheranism in America. Ordained in 1850 by the Synod of Northern Illinois, he soon came to exert an influence upon both Esbjörn and Hasselquist. He could never become reconciled to the fact that these men had accepted support from the American Home Missionary Society, that Esbjörn had entertained leanings towards the Methodists, and that he was desirous of coöperating with other churches for the common good. Stephenson says he was also "repelled at the free and easy ways of Hasselquist." There is much evidence that Norelius was "the power behind the throne" both before and after the founding of the Augustana Synod.[2]

In the process of institutionalization, much of the zeal and passion for personal soul-winning which had characterized the founders was overshadowed by an anxiety for extending and safeguarding the denominational boundaries and preserving a literal interpretation of the Augsburg Confession. While this policy of perpetuating and confirming the denominational policy may have been unavoidable, it was to create much opposition among the more pietistically inclined among the membership. They were supported by the hyper-evangelicals of the immigrants who called attention to the many similarities between the Augustana Synod and the Church of Sweden. Many of them had come to America in order to escape from the rigid and legalized forms of that church. They desired to remain true Lutherans, on Luther's own terms and not on the interpretation of these terms. They accepted literally the Scriptural statement of the "priesthood of the believer" and wanted

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[1]These refer to the Catechism used before 1810 and the Psalm Books used before 1811 and 1819. In the opinion of the Hedbergians the "new books" were contaminated by traces of neology and the teaching of good works.

[2]Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . ., p. 176.

Lutheran pulpits opened to believing ministers and laymen whether they were strictly Lutheran or not.[1] They objected to the indiscriminate gathering of all Swedes into the church, irrespective of their personal religious experience, and they opposed the idea of the equal participation in the Holy Communion of believers and unbelievers.

In the years after 1860, as the Augustana Synod became increasingly institutionalized, the records reveal a growing reactionary spirit among its leaders. Esbjörn, who from the beginning had been a strict confessionalist, had nevertheless been a warm supporter of more liberal tendencies. Stephenson observes:

> He came with a distinctly liberal spirit, but experience with the proselyting activities of a variety of sects hardened him into an uncompromising symbolist, although he was sometimes forced to trim his sails to meet this or that situation during the twelve years of his activity in America.[2]

Hasselquist, a true pietist from the beginning, adapted himself readily to American conditions, though, as we have noted, various causes motivated him to modify his point of view somewhat.[3] Nevertheless, Hasselquist appears to have retained his Pietism in a more intact form than any one else among the leaders. Norelius appears from 1855 as the uncompromising symbolist and nationalist, a believer in the exclusiveness of the Swedish Lutherans and their doctrines.

Esbjörn and Hasselquist do not appear to have chafed under the condition laid down by the American Home Missionary Society that they report the number of conversions which they had experienced. In a letter in 1850 to Dr. Milton Badger, corresponding secretary of the American Home Missionary Society, Esbjörn writes:

> I feel unable to express my gratitude for the commission and support which enables me to work among the Swedes. . . . . My own intention and that of my conscience, in addition to the

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[1] By 1875 the Augustana Synod had gone on record in the famous Galesburg Rule as saying: "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran ministers only; Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only." In the light of the decision made at Akron three years before which left each congregation free to decide its own action, this rule was defined as educational rather than legislative. Stephenson, Religious Aspects, p. 317.

[2] Ibid., p. 164.

[3] Ibid., pp. 169, 176-77. Supra, p.

> rules of the A. H. M. A., direct me not to receive into membership in the church anyone not born again. But here is the real small gate and narrow way for a Swedish missionary. The Swedes consider it an infamy for anyone to be excluded from the Communion. They are willing to submit to anything but this. The second of last December (1849), I conducted a communion service in the church in Andover in accordance with this principle and talked first with the communicants.[1]

In 1851, when the Swedish Lutheran Church at Andover appealed to the American Home Missionary Society for financial support for Esbjörn,[2] its request was promptly granted. Esbjörn's activities in 1851 gave Norelius occasion to write of his colleague as follows:

> With all the piety and respect which I have for Professor L. P. Esbjörn, and irrespective of how highly I value his activities in America, still I most strongly disapprove and regret his relationship with the American Home Missionary Society, a situation which almost made the rise of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America an impossibility. That a true confessional church arose nevertheless, I accredit to the peculiar and compassionate guidance of God. How could Esbjörn throw himself into the arms of such a thoroughly reformed puritanical and, in all respects, anti-Lutheran association as the American Home Missionary Society?. . . .As far as Esbjörn is concerned, he believed strongly in an ecumenicity long after he had caught sight of the genuinely Lutheran confession, yes, one may say, even to the beginning of 1860.[3]

Norelius, however, draws a sharp distinction between Esbjörn's ecumenical spirit and his antagonism toward the teaching of the Reformed branch of the church, bringing in as evidence a letter from Esbjörn to Hasselquist:

> Your opinion of Münkel is now about the same as the impression he first made on me, as you remember. . . . .But otherwise I like to say that these 'pillars of pure doctrine' (renlärighetsstolpar) for the N. S. Presbyterianism (and Congregationalism) who. . . .are sent out as teachers of the 'New England Divinity' by the American Home Mission, have greatly surprised me. I smell the doctrine of works in them . . . . .But last Sunday I found the core of this rottenness in Hopkin's works, volume two, paragraph 281. . . . .he cites the place with the objective to prove that 'persons must first be holy and love God before they have any assurance or evidence that God loves them, and that they shall be saved, the latter being the effect and not the cause of the former.'[4]

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[1] See Norelius, Historia, I, 130-34.

[2] Ibid., pp. 125-27. See also Korsbaneret, 1885, p. 36.

[3] Norelius, op. cit., pp. 142-43.

[4] Ibid., p. 143.

"And still," says Norelius, "he saw no danger of being in communion with people who propagated such a doctrine."[1]

While Anglicanism, Methodism, Eric-Jansonism, and the Baptists antedate Lutheranism in the history of the second phase of Swedish immigration, the Swedish Lutheran Church was soon to become strongest numerically. Even in the years prior to the founding of the Augustana Synod, when immigration was merely a trickle of what it was to become in the next two decades, the Lutheran church, though exposed to the proselyting influences of other churches, continued to retain this lead. Immigrants, even though they carried with them an antipathy for the Swedish State Church, still preferred the Lutheran label because of their background. As a result, the pastors of other churches made it a point to emphasize all points of similarity with the Lutheran doctrine. Moreover, the early Lutheran pastors, such as Esbjörn, Hasselquist, and Carlsson, were, as we have seen, Pietists and of an ecumenical spirit who adapted themselves readily to American conditions. That this attitude by the pastors exerted a wholesome influence on the immigrants, many of whom were dissatisfied with the state church, is revealed by excerpts of "America Letters." The following are typical of the spirit:

> We have a Swedish pastor. . . . .He is a disciple of the esteemed Pastor Sellergren. . . . .During the past eleven months he has preached every Sunday and holiday; and on week days he works the same as the rest of us because his remarkable ability makes it unnecessary for him to write his sermons. One Sunday I heard him preach for over two hours, and he was as fluent the second hour as the first.[2]

Another writes:

> There are also Swedish preachers here who are so well versed in the Bible and in the correct interpretation that

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[1] Ibid.; Norelius was not a Pietist except possibly in the sense of an Old Reader of Luther. He comes closer to the Hedbergians who stressed regeneration in baptism. He was the great historian of the church and during the critical decades the moving power in the synod.

[2] Pastor Lorenz Sellergren was a prominent evangelistic minister within the State Church of Sweden. For the letter see George M. Stephenson, "When America Was the Land of Canaan," in the Linder Collection, Augustana College Archives, Rock Island, Illinois, September, 1929. 250. These are letters from individuals in America to their relatives and friends in Sweden, and gathered by Stephenson.

> they seek the lost sheep and receive them again into their embrace and do not conduct themselves after the manner of Sweden, where the sheep must seek the shepherd and address him with high sounding titles.[1]

Still another writes:

> America is a great light in Christendom; there is ceaseless striving to spread the healing of salvation of the gospel. The pastors are not lords in their profession, neither are they rich in the goods of this world. They strive to walk in the way God has commanded. They minister unceasingly to the spiritual and material welfare of men. There is as great a difference between the pastors here and in Sweden as there is between night and day.[2]

From the inception of their work in America, the Swedish Lutheran mimisters were anxious to avoid a repetition of the fate of the Swedish Lutheran churches on the Delaware, which had finally passed into control of the Episcopal Church after their inability to affiliate with any of the Lutheran synods, and their severance from the mother church. To that end, Esbjörn cast about for a synodical relationship. It will also be recalled that his continued support by the American Home Missionary Society was contingent on his being affiliated with a recognized church organization. He did not want to unite with any of the English synods of the East, because these were considered tinged with "the New Lutheranism."[3] There were the German Lutheran synods, but these were too distant to be of any practical help. Finally the Synod of Northern Illinois was organized at Cedarville, Stephenson County, Illinois, September 18, 1851, by representatives of German and Norwegian congregations.[4] At this meeting Esbjörn appeared with his lay delegate and was admitted to membership. Since Esbjörn was dissatisfied with the confessional basis of the synod which accepted the Augsburg Confession as "mainly correct," he requested and was granted the right to incorporate into the minutes the principles on which his churches were organized, namely, "that the Symbolic Books of the Lutheran Church contain a correct sum-

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

[3] George M. Stephenson, The Founding of the Augustana Synod, 1850-1860 (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1927), p. 15.

[4] Minutes of the First Session of the Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois (Augustana College Archives, Rock Island, Illinois), p. 2.

mary and exposition of the divine word, wherefore we declare and adopt them as the foundation of our faith and doctrine, next to the Holy Scriptures."[1] Other Swedish Lutheran ministers were admitted from time to time, Hasselquist becoming one of its most influential members.[2]

The Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois afterwards became affiliated as a district synod with the General Synod, which being nation-wide in its scope was a union of synods. By 1860 it embraced two-thirds of all Lutherans in America. Founded on a broad liberal basis, it asserted that the "fundamental doctrines of the Word of God are taught in a manner substantially correct in the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession."[3] By 1850 there had developed within this synod a cleavage between those who advocated a broader interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, who were referred to as the "American Lutherans" or "new measure men," and those Symbolists who supported a rigidly literal interpretation. In supporting the motion to affiliate the Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois with the General Synod, Esbjörn was careful to have inserted into the minutes the condition: "Provided that this union shall not be construed as an acknowledgment on the part of all the members of the Synod of Northern Illinois of the precise doctrinal basis of the General Synod."[4] From the beginning Esbjörn appears in the role of defender of orthodoxy whose zeal in this direction increased with the years.[5]

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[1] Ibid., p. 3.

[2] Minutes of the Second Session of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Northern Illinois, 1852, pp. 6, 15.

[3] Abdel Wentz, The Lutheran Church in American History (Philadelphia, 1923), p. 173.

[4] The General Synod was influenced by Puritanism and Methodism says Norelius, for "one can almost say that the great spirit of Puritanism has set its stamp on everything and everybody in America." Norelius, Historia, I, 781. Esbjörn characteristically calls the "new Lutheranism" "Reformed views under a Lutheran name or the result of German rationalism." See Esbjörn, "De svenska församlingarna. . . . ." pp. 42-43.

[5] When the question is asked why Esbjörn would be willing to affiliate himself and his work with this synod, one must bear in mind the requisite of synodical affiliation established by the American Home Missionary Association in order to be eligible for

By 1849 the Lutherans in Illinois had founded a school of their own. This school was moved in 1852 to Springfield, Illinois, and given the formidable name of Illinois State University.[1] Since there was great need for an educated ministry among the Swedes, the Synod of Northern Illinois established a Scandinavian professorship in Theology.[2] To this professorship Esbjörn was later called to train young men for the gospel ministry among the Scandinavians.[3] Esbjörn accepted the call and entered upon his duties in the fall of 1858.[4]

Esbjörn's connection with the university lasted for only a year and a half. His dissatisfaction with the doctrinal attitude of the General Synod gradually increased. When he was assigned a number of secular courses, he felt himself hindered in his theological teaching and spiritual care of the Scandinavian students. Finally when he became involved in a series of personal controversies with the President, he resigned and left the university abruptly in March, 1860, in the midst of the semester.[5] Nearly all the Scandinavian students also left the institution. A conference of leaders of the Swedish churches called for April

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support. Esbjörn also calls attention to the hope which he entertained that the affiliation with the Synod of Northern Illinois would augment the existing conservative forces within the synod. Moreover, he expected that with the constantly increasing immigration, the conservatives would finally be in majority. Ibid., p. 43. Norelius, however, states that Esbjörn was a unionist up to 1860, that is, he believed in coöperating with other churches for the common good. Norelius, op. cit., I, 792-93.

[1] Stephenson, The Founding of the Augustana Synod, pp. 33-47.

[2] Minutes, Synod of Northern Illinois, October 4-8, 1855 (Archives, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois).

[3] Ibid., October 1, 1857.

[4] Ibid., September, 1858; see also The American Origin of the Augustana Synod. From Contemporary Lutheran Periodicals, 1851-1860. A collection of source material gathered and edited by O. F. Ander, and Oscar L. Nordstrom, with an introduction by George M. Stephenson. Augustana Historical Society Publications (Rock Island, 1942), p. 75.

[5] Stephenson, Founding of the Augustana Synod, pp. 116-17. Also The American Origin of the Augustana Synod, op. cit., pp. 112-14, 160-61.

23, sanctioned Esbjörn's action.[1] Said Hasselquist in Hemlandet:

> Esbjörn has found himself forced to resign his position at Illinois State University. . . . .The reasons are many but especially important is the one that it sought to inoculate so-called new Lutheran ideas and has taken it up ill when Professor Esbjörn sought to protect the Swedish students from this contagion. These ideas are not really Lutheran at all, but they aim at silencing or denying Lutheran teaching with regard to baptism and communion, and attempt to distort other important Lutheran doctrines. In neither case should or can our professor and our students acquiesce.[2]

In June, 1860, the Swedish Lutheran churches seceded from the Synod of Northern Illinois and the General Synod,[3] founding the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod,[4] which in due time affiliated with the General Council.[5]

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[1]Stephenson, op. cit., p. 130; also Hemlandet, April 4, 1860.

[2]Hemlandet, April 11, 1860.

[3]Augustana Synodens Protokoll (1860-1870) Protokoll hållet vid Skandinaviska Lutherska Augustana Synodens första möte i Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin, June 5-11, 1860. (Augustana College Archives, Rock Island, Illinois.)

[4]Ibid.

[5]The General Council was organized in 1867, and the Augustana Synod coöperated from the beginning but did not officially affiliate themselves until 1870. Stephenson, Religious Aspects . . . . ., p. 233.

CHAPTER X

DISSENTERS WITHIN THE SWEDISH LUTHERAN CHURCHES

As has been stated, after the founding of the Augustana Synod in 1860, the records reveal a growing reactionary spirit among its leaders. In the process of institutionalization, much of the zeal and passion for personal soul-winning which had characterized the founders was overshadowed by an anxiety for extending and safeguarding the denominational boundaries and preserving a literal interpretation of the Augsburg Confession, excluding non-Lutheran ministers and laymen from Lutheran pulpits, adopting a formal and liturgical service of worship, and admitting to church membership and holy communion all who accepted the credal and confessional requirements of the church irrespective of an inner spiritual experience. This course of action, aimed at perpetuating and confirming denominational policy and interests, was soon to create a growing opposition among the more pietistically inclined members. These were supported by the hyper-evangelicals among the immigrants who called attention to the many similarities between the Augustana Synod and the Church of Sweden. Many of them had come to America in order to escape from the rigid and legalized forms of that church. They desired to remain true Lutherans on the basis of their understanding of the Reformer's teaching, not on the interpretation or accretion of his doctrines. They accepted literally the Scriptural assertion of the "priesthood of the believers," and wanted Lutheran pulpits opened to any believing pastor or layman whether he was strictly Lutheran or not. More and more they remonstrated against the gathering into the church of all Swedes who professed the Christian faith, irrespective of their personal religious experiences, and they firmly opposed the idea of equal participation in the Holy Communion of "true believers" and ordinary church members. To them religion was an individual, inner experience or it was nothing. Decent living and church membership were not enough. Based on such convictions, a growing discontent appeared in definite forms in some

Augustana churches shortly after the founding of the synod. It found various expressions as will be seen in the following typical examples.

Swede Bend, Webster County, Iowa, is the site of the oldest of the Swedish Mission Societies in America.[1] The small settlement of Swede Bend was populated largely by Swedish immigrants who had been unable to redeem their land "claims" in other counties; this group was augmented by those who came directly from Sweden. At an early date this settlement and many others became the scene of the proselyting efforts of various religious faiths. Thus a Methodist Episcopal adventurer, Smith, dismissed from his own church, agitated and won adherents among this group.[2] Smith was joined by such Methodist-Episcopal preachers as P. Kassel and Anders Erikson, who also won a number of converts. Then came the Baptists who made appreciable inroads only to have much of their efforts nullified through the zeal of Anders Erikson and another Methodist preacher, P. Nyberg. Erikson appears to have arrived in the party of L. P. Esbjörn, and remained as pastor of the Methodist flock. M. F. Hokanson, a Lutheran preacher, visited the settlement in about 1854[3] and was able to win many of the Methodist and Baptist people back to the Lutheran faith. In 1859 a Lutheran congregation was organized at Swede Bend with forty charter members.[4] Hokanson, pastor of the newly organized church, also ministered to the Lutheran church at Swede Point,[5] Iowa.

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[1]Swede Bend is situated near Stratford, Boone County, Iowa.

[2]Norelius, Historia, I, 103-07. I have been unable to find his first name.

[3]Hokanson had arrived from Sweden in 1847. A Pietist he was asked to conduct devotional services among his countrymen. Fearful lest he should be called to preach, Hokanson is said to have sought to hide his religious experiences, but when he saw the great need he could no longer withhold his services. In due time he came under the supervision of the Lutherans, especially Esbjörn and Hasselquist. Lacking the educational background of a Lutheran pastor, he became for a while an adherent of the Baptists. In a letter to Esbjörn he confessed his "backsliding" and was received again into the Lutheran circle and continued as a pioneering Lutheran minister in Iowa. Norelius, op. cit., I, 88-97.

[4]Ibid., pp. 103-07.

[5]Madrid, Iowa.

A broadminded and tolerant personality, he had a sympathetic understanding of the free movements. Thus he readily gave his permission to Hans Blom, a lay preacher and member of his congregation at Swede Point, to gather the people of the community for devotional meetings in the homes. Under Blom's leadership a revival, which had Pastor Hokanson's hearty approval, broke out in the church. Blom left the community in 1868, and in the absence of his leadership, the group organized themselves in 1872 into the "Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church," now called the First Evangelical Free Church of Madrid, Iowa.[1]

When Hokanson left the Swede Bend settlement in 1867, the Lutheran church numbered one hundred and thirty communicants.[2] At least two of these members were Pietists from Sweden. They were Hans Oberg, custodian of the church, and C. A. Björk, a deacon. The latter was destined to become the first president of the Evangelical Mission Covenant of America. Björk, a former soldier and shoemaker, arrived at Swede Bend in 1864. During his first Sunday in the community, he is said to have gathered the household where he stayed for a devotional service, when he read from Pietisten and sang Ahnfelt's songs. His Pietism made him a conspicuous personality in the community. People said he was a läsare or reader and readers had a reputation of being a bit queer. Soon, however, they learned to esteem their religiously inclined neighbor as an honest and sensible man in whom they could have complete confidence.[3]

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[1] Walfred Olson, Here the Mission Covenant Began (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1944), pp. 13, 14, 32, 33. See also The Golden Jubilee of the Swedish Evangelical Free Church (Madrid, Iowa, no date), p. 74.

[2] Olson, loc. cit.; see also C. M. Youngquist, "Återblick över den fria evangeliska missionsverksamheten bland svenskarna i Amerika," Hem-Missionären. Kristlig tidskrift för ungdomen, hemmet och församlingen. Utgiven av Svenska Evangeliska Missionsföreningen i Nebraska (Omaha: Tryckt a Svenska-Journalen-Tribunens Bok-och Accidentstryckeri), May, 1892. This religious periodical was published from April, 1892 to December, 1893. All of the issues are gathered in one bound volume. In a series of well written articles, Youngquist reviews the beginnings of the Mission Covenant. The volume is deposited in the Covenant Archives.

[3] C. A. Bowman, C. A. Björk. Levnadsteckning (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1934), pp. 18-19. This work consists largely of primary material, being Björk's autobiographical notes

Immediately after his arrival at Swede Bend, Björk joined the Lutheran church. Soon afterward he was elected a deacon. In the absence of the minister, Björk was asked from time to time to conduct the religious services in the church, alternating with Oberg, the custodian. This arrangement had the hearty endorsement of Pastor Hokanson and was carried on after the pastor resigned in 1867. Björk usually read from Pietisten, the religious periodical edited by Rosenius. A few conversions resulted from these efforts. In the meantime, Björk made the acquaintance of Blom, the lay preacher at Swede Point, who maintained a similar status in his church.[1]

It was Good Friday, 1867, and Björk was scheduled to conduct the worship service. Vainly he sought for his copy of Pietisten, from which to read the text and the meditation. When he inquired of his friend, Oberg, the custodian replied: "Oh you will get it back again when you need it, but today you can read from the Bible."[2] Björk states his reaction thus:

> With fear and trembling I read the day's text about the suffering and death of Jesus. A wonderful spirit of power came over me, and I began to preach. It was one of my most glorious experiences, and the memory of it has lingered with me throughout my entire ministry. The audience was deeply moved and some came under the conviction of sin.[3]

That some of the listeners were gripped by the presentation to the point of conviction, was evidenced by two farmers after the service. "I am telling you Per," one of them said, "if we don't get converted, we'll go straight to hell." "Quiet," replied

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discovered after his death. See also C. E. Backstrom, C. A. Björk, A Memorial Biography. This is a brief but excellent biography of Björk.

[1]Blom was the first preacher among the immigrants at Des Moines, Iowa, where a Lutheran church was organized by a visiting Lutheran pastor in 1869. The organization caused a division among the people, and the dissenting element under Blom organized themselves into a Mission Society in 1870. Blom thereupon moved to Kansas and became one of the pioneering pastors in that state. For an interesting and authoritative account of the dissenting movement and the pioneer preachers, see Youngquist, "Återblick . . . . ." in Hem-Missionären.

[2]Bowman, C. A. Björk, p. 12.

[3]Ibid. The Englund mentioned became the first chairman of the new organization that came into being.

the other with a gesture, for he saw the preacher coming out of the church. "Quiet," he continued in a subdued voice, "I know it! I know it!"[1]

After the meeting the leaders met and called Björk to serve as interim preacher, while awaiting the arrival of the new pastor, Rev. C. J. Malmberg,[2] a student at the Augustana Lutheran seminary at Paxton, Illinois. Björk accepted the call and served until early summer when Malmberg was to assume charge for the summer months. Under Björk's ministry a revival broke out in the church. When Malmberg arrived he was much disturbed over the revivalist spirit within the church and the attitude of the "believers." To correct the situation, he preached a series of sermons on the theological differences between the Catholic, Reformed and Lutheran faiths with the purpose of making his members "true Lutherans." Björk says: "This he continued to do so long that he forgot to preach the word of God. And there were many newly converted who hungered after the gospel, and they felt that this was too meagre a fare to live on. When they asked him to preach the word of God, he began to stamp them and me as heretical. The result was that many believers began to plan to found a mission society, though none intended to leave the church."[3]

The pastor then called in several Lutheran ministers to intervene. These mimisters held meetings with the people "to heal the rifts in Zion," as they expressed it.[4] The discussions lasted many days but nothing seemed to help. In the midst of a discussion an elderly woman arose and said, "I intend to go to the communion next Sunday and before this I want you pastors to offer proof that Björk has spoken lies in the name of the Lord." When the ministers were taken by surprise, a small one-eyed tailor stood up in the aisle and said, "Dear pastors, do not be startled by a woman; there are many more here who desire to have these matters clarified."[5]

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[1]Björk himself overheard this remark and gives it in his notes.

[2]Malmberg, then a student at Augustana seminary was to serve the church during the summer months and assume full charge the following spring.

[3]Bowman, C. A. Björk, p. 21. [4]Ibid. [5]Ibid., pp. 21-22.

At another meeting, a farmer is reported to have expressed himself thus:

> In my community in Sweden they had built a large and beautiful church. But after a while great crevices were seen in the walls. They tried to repair these and finally used great iron bands to keep the church together, but it divided more and more. Then they made an investigation and found that one half of the church was built on rock and the other half on loose sand. Finally the entire church had to be razed to the ground, because its foundation was faulty. Now, you pastors have tried the entire week to heal the rifts in the church, but those are still just as large because the foundation is not sound. Here one part rests on Christ the Rock, while another part has been built on loose sand.[1]

Björk was invited by the dissenters to continue his preaching in a school house, though they were still members of the Lutheran congregation. The situation was one of incompatibility which would be difficult to overcome even in a spirit of understanding and good will. Accentuating the tenseness of the situation was the organized opposition by the Lutheran clergy led by the pastor-elect. The dissenters were opposed bitterly and labeled as heretics and backsliders from the true church. This added fuel to the fire and inevitably led to schism and secession.[2]

On July 4, 1868, the dissenters met in Peter Englund's home for an organizational meeting. Here they broke with the past; yet their appreciation of their spiritual and historical heritage was demonstrated in the name of the new organization: The Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Association.[3] Though they constituted the majority of the membership in the Lutheran church, they did not as yet withdraw from that church. But the cleavage between the two groups grew continually wider and finally led to complete separation.

At the Annual Meeting of the Association on June 24, 1869, Rev. C. J. Malmberg remonstrated with the members reminding them

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[1] Bowman, C. A. Björk, p. 22.

[2] Ibid., pp. 22-25.

[3] Protokollbok för Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missionsföreningen i Swede Bend, Iowa, den 4 juli, 1868. The minutes of this historic meeting are startlingly bare, giving only the three members of the board and a decision that a constitution be prepared. The first board members were Peter Englund, chairman; A. W. Hedenschoug, secretary, and H. Hakanson, treasurer.

that they would be held to an accounting for meeting in the homes of church members. Then C. A. Bygel, one of the dissenters, arose and declared: "Let come whatever will!" Then taking a paper from his pocket and placing it with decided emphasis on a table, he added, "All who are in favor of extending a call to Björk and are willing to contribute to his support sign your name here."[1] Concerning the matter of celebrating the Holy Communion, it was decided that it should be a matter of personal choice until they had heard further from the Mission Association in Chicago. This meeting also went on record as requesting membership in the Mission Association in Chicago. C. A. Björk was elected pastor for a year and a new board was chosen.[2] For all practical purposes the dissenters had now established themselves independently, though the formal change of the Association into an autonomous congregation did not take place until April 21, 1882.[3]

In the meantime the Association was wielding a great influence in Iowa, through the untiring efforts of Björk[4] who followed the method of the circuit riders, and reached as far as Sioux City by 1871. In addition to his work at Swede Bend, Björk also had been the pioneer preacher at Pilot Mound (across the Des Moines River from the Swede Bend settlement), Moingona, Montana (Boone), Boonesboro (West Boone), Marshalltown, Swede Point, Swede Valley, West Dayton (Dayton), and Lost Grove (Lanyon). Thus by October 1, 1870, a larger missionary association was organized, with Boonesboro, Montana, Swede Bend and Swede Point as members. Each group had its own local board of officers, and Björk was

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[1] Bowman, The Mission Covenant (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1925), pp. 28-29; see also Olson, op. cit., pp. 15-16. The Protokollbok merely states that subscription lists were prepared.

[2] Protokollbok för Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missionsförsamlingen i Swede Bend, Iowa, June 24, 1869.

[3] Ibid., April 21, 1882.

[4] For other sources evaluating the labors of Björk, see Theo. W. Anderson, "Centenary Anniversary of Carl August Björk," The Covenant Weekly, August 3, 1937; also "Björk Centenary," The Covenant Weekly, July 27, 1937; Otto Högfeldt, "Carl August Björk," Missionsvännen, July 27, 1937; also Eric Brolund, "En minnesruna," Ibid.

called upon to serve the entire circuit.[1] In the beginning Swede Bend and Pilot Mound were considered one group, but for practical purposes the people of Pilot Mound began to have services in their homes and school houses when the river would not permit passage. In the new organization, however, this situation was recognized and the new congregation when it was organized in April, 1882, included Pilot Mound in its name.[2] By action of the meeting the missionary association was now called The Swedish Evangelical Mission Church in Swede Bend and Pilot Mound. The constitution adopted at this meeting is of interest to us because of the information it gives regarding purpose and membership.

> The purpose of this congregation is to come together around the Word of God for edification and help in everything that God's Word admonishes and teaches, and for the work of the expansion of the Kingdom of God. And we desire these churches not only to be united with a certain denomination, but with all children of God, in whatever place God's children are.[3]

The last statement enunciates the principle on which the Evangelical Mission Covenant was finally founded and as such is prophetic. The decision to incorporate the congregation came on December 26, 1886.[4] The incorporation was finally effected May 28, 1887.[5]

In Galesburg, Illinois, there grew up gradually within the church an extreme party that held it sinful for the pastor to wear the vestments of a clergyman, to read the confession of sin, or to follow the order of the Swedish state church. These dissenters did not want the congregation to rise during the reading of the Scriptures; they wanted the clergyman to sit rather than stand before the altar, and they forbade him to use the tabs.[6] Opposed

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[1] Olson, op. cit., pp. 16-17, 37-39. See also Protokollsbok för Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missionsföreningen i Swede Bend, October 1, 1870.

[2] Ibid., April 24, 1882.

[3] Ibid., April 24, 1882. This dual arrangement called for one executive board and one pastor. It is uncertain when this dual arrangement was terminated. Article eight provided that all the real estate of the two groups "shall eternally remain their property in common."

[4] Protokoll, December 26, 1886.

[5] C. E. Backstrom has supplied the information that incorporation took place on May 28, 1887, at Ft. Dodge, Iowa.

[6] On one occasion, when H. Olson was the minister, one of the deacons is said to have gone forward and attempted to snatch off the tabs. Norelius, Historia, I, 236.

to the increasing high-church tendencies in both ministry and ritual, this group by 1868 made its influence felt to the extent that the President of the Augustana Synod felt called upon to make the following statement in his presidential report at the annual meeting:

> It cannot be denied that in these days we have conclusive evidence that we belong to the militant church. It appears that for some time, ever since the founding of the Synod and ever since the founding of our churches in this country, we have been encompassed by enemies who join forces in doing us harm. . . .on one hand disbelief. . . .on the other hand, a Pietism which through misunderstanding or deceit arms against itself. As is known, the powerful spiritual revival in the fatherland during the last decade has brought not only good fruit but also, as unfortunately often happens, unripe and even bitter and poisonous fruit and a variety of religious sects, which in their violence turn especially against the Lutheran church, as she stands in their way through her firm confession and order.[1]

The immediate cause for the statement were the following two resolutions sent by the Galesburg congregation to this meeting stating that:

> Whereas the congregation on many occasions has taken into consideration the possible reason for denying the presence of the delegate at the deliberations of the Synod, and since this fact has aroused great dissatisfaction and caused much anxiety and unpleasantness, we demand that our delegate be admitted to all the discussions of the synod and the ministerium.
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> This congregation also makes the reservation that no pastor may appear (in the pulpit) in special vestments or with ceremonies, as all such is destructive and harmful and hurts the consciences of many. We are satisfied to listen to the Word of God.[2]

While the synod sought to placate the dissenters in a resolution and directed the President and Secretary of the synod to visit the Galesburg church and acquaint them with the point of view of the synod, the result was negative. The critical situation within the church was accentuated by the refusal of the pastor of the church to permit Nils G. Bergensköld, a lay preacher from Sweden, to preach in the church. Meetings were then arranged in

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[1] Augustana Synodens Protokoll, 1868.

[2] Ibid.; see also Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, July, 1892.

the homes where Bergensköld ministered to the dissenters.[1] By August 1, 1868, this group of dissenters met to organize into a mission society similar to those in Sweden; thirty-one individuals signed their names as charter members. The following day, the group organized themselves into a church "in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the Augsburg Confession as the rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct."[2] The requirement for membership was a personal conversion experience and a living faith in Christ. The official name adopted was "The Second Lutheran Church of Galesburg, Illinois."[3] Three weeks later thirty-five more names were added to the original list. Shortly afterwards Nils Bergensköld was chosen to serve the group as its minister.[4]

T. N. Hasselquist, President of the Augustana Synod, at the next annual meeting of the synod decried the secession at Galesburg as the work of self-appointed lay preachers imposing upon the congregation and causing dissatisfaction. Said he:

> The questions which were discussed and answered at the last synodical meeting by request of a number of members of the Galesburg church caused some discontented to leave the congregation, thereby providing the evidence of their intention to force the synod to abandon its adopted and true point of view regarding the church order. However, the separatist congregation has now become supported by the Synod of Northern Illinois, which does not spare money, encouragements, and synodical decisions in the hope of dispersing our congregations and leading them into the sleek and slippery roads which they themselves walk, while under the high-sounding and hypocritical name "freedom" they teach themselves and the people to look down upon the fundamental doctrines which are biblical and which characterize the Reformation and the Lutheran church. It tries thereby to join that which cannot be joined without leaving the truth.[5]

Norelius in analyzing the factors that led to the secession at Galesburg emphasizes that the real cause was to be found in "a cowardly and thoughtless compromise for the reformed-puritan-

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[1] Diamond Jubilee Anniversary, 1868-1943, Mission Covenant Church, Galesburg, Illinois, p. 7; also Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, loc. cit.

[2] Diamond Jubilee Anniversary, p. 7. Also Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, loc. cit.

[3] Ibid. [4] Ibid.

[5] Augustana Synodens Protokoll, 1869, "President's Report."

ical sectarianism"[1] by the early Lutheran leaders. Both Esbjörn and Hasselquist had demonstrated as much of a spirit of freedom with regard to the liturgical and ritualistic part of the service as any of the pastors of the reformed denominations. By the time of Hasselquist's arrival, the Galesburg settlement had become well permeated by the teaching of the Congregationalists with regard to church order. Hasselquist himself entered into this spirit of freedom, either out of conviction or because of lack of insight into the consequences of such a policy.[2] In historical perspective it appears doubtful that a second church would ever have been organized had Hasselquist and his successors continued this liberal policy.[3] Norelius, however, while deploring the schism, makes the following significant statement:

> Possibly it was best for the congregation that it [secession] took place, as the congregation afterwards assumed a more Lutheran character.[4]

Shortly after its organization, the Second Lutheran Church of Galesburg, sent a representative to the November meeting of the Synod of Northern Illinois to secure information concerning advantages and obligations of member churches of the synod and to request a visit by one of their Swedish pastors to state the constitutional requirements of membership.[5] As a result the Reverend Charles Anderson, a minister of Danish birth and member of the synod, was sent to the Galesburg church to give the desired information.[6] After his presentation, the church voted unanimously to affiliate with the synod.[7] In December, 1868, Anderson was called to the pastorate of the Second Church and assumed his duties

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[1]Norelius, Historia, I, 236-37. [2]Ibid.

[3]Erik Brolund, Missionsvännerna. Jämförelser och studier. (Chicago: The Mission Friend Publishing Company, 1938), p. 65.

[4]Norelius, Historia, I, 237.

[5]Protokollsbok för Andra Svenska Lutherska Församlingen i Galesburg, Illinois, October 23, 1868. Jonas Petter Jannson was chosen representative to this meeting. See also "Svenska Missionsfältet i Amerika," in Zions Banér, September 13 to October 4, 1878. Zions Banér was a religious-political periodical.

[6]Protokollbok, Andra Lutherska Församlingen i Galesburg, November 23, 1868.

[7]Ibid.

in February, 1869.[1] Though a Lutheran and member of the Synod of Northern Illinois, Anderson was soon to be declared persona non grata by his fellow Lutherans within the Augustana fold. His activity in soliciting funds in various Lutheran churches and settlements for a new church building at Galesburg, led Hasselquist to raise a warning in his presidential report:

> When therefore the pastor of the separatist congregation at Galesburg, Pastor C. Anderson, on behalf of the General Synod, visits our churches and settlements, everyone will know who he is and whose errands he performs.[2]

The Galesburg church was to play an important role in the early and subsequent history of the Mission Covenant. Following an independent and liberal policy, it set a pattern for similar behavior in other Lutheran congregations.

The story of the secession in the Swedish Lutheran Church of Chicago follows, in the main, the same pattern as that of the Swede Bend Church. We have already noted that Erland Carlsson, the pastor, was himself a Pietist and revivalist in the early years. Many of Carlsson's members were converts and followers of Rosenius in Sweden, "impatient with the emptiness of the formality and ritual of the State church of Sweden." Their number was augmented by converts from the great revivals that swept America in 1856-1858. These converted immigrants wanted a "pure" church, a church membership consisting of believers only. They became critical of a situation which called for fellowship with the "unbelievers" in worship and leadership of the church. There is evidence that their pastor shared their view of a pure church;

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[1] Diamond Jubilee Anniversary at Galesburg, p. 9. Upon Anderson's arrival the congregation decided to have English services Sunday evenings for six months and to use English hymn books. At the end of that time, it was agreed to use Swedish every other Sunday evening. In January, 1871, it was decided to have all services in Swedish, the pastor to conduct an English service in the afternoon when he so desired. Upon his arrival, Anderson, who in the words of Sällström as quoted in the Diamond Jubilee pamphlet spoke only "intelligible Swedish," had attained to somewhat of a mastery of the language by 1871. In correspondence with the present pastor of the Galesburg church, Mrs. Nettie Whipple Anderson, widow of Anderson, states that her husband immediately upon his coming to the Galesburg pastorate began the study of the Swedish language. See Letter from Mrs. Nettie Whipple Anderson to Rev. J. Alfred Johnson, in Mission Covenant Archives.

[2] Augustana Synodens Protokoll, 1869.

nevertheless, he also recognized the Lutheran position of the visible church also being a field as over against the dissenters' view that the world is the field. Gradually there arose a difference of opinion between the dissenting elements within the church and the pastor. This difference became more accentuated after the founding of the Augustana Synod, and especially during the years 1867 and onward.

It was in this situation that many of the pietistic members began to discuss the religious condition of the church with the pastor. Among those who discussed with Carlsson the advisability of organizing a mission society, thus providing an organization for spiritual activities within the church where the "believers" would have a common interest, was Martin Sundin, an immigrant convert who had arrived from Sweden in 1864.[1] Sundin is said to have prevailed upon his pastor to organize such a society on the pattern of those organized in Sweden under the auspices of the Fatherland Foundation. Its purpose was to work for the spiritual well being of the Immanuel church in general and to carry on colporteur work among the Swedish immigrants in Chicago. To the disappointment of Sundin and the other Christians, the membership was open to all irrespective of spiritual experience. This disappointment was shared by the large number of immigrants who arrived from Sweden in 1867-1868. Many of these had been under the influence of the revivals that swept the entire land of Sweden under the ministry of Rosenius. Under the leadership of Sundin and John Peterson, who later became one of the great pioneer preachers, these converts began to conduct devotional meetings in their homes.[2] J. M. Sanngren, a colporteur from Sweden who arrived in America in 1868, upon the call of his cousin, a Lutheran minister in the Augustana Synod, exerted a profound influence upon this group as well as upon large numbers of others. Permitted to speak in the

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[1] Martin Sundin is said to have been the first "Mission Friend" in America. He joined the Immanuel Church in 1864. In 1867 he moved to Swede Bend, Iowa, where he was a leading spirit in organizing a Mission Association in the Swedish Lutheran Church. He spent the winter of 1868-1869 in Chicago and returned to Iowa in the spring of 1869. There he served as a lay preacher. He died in Des Moines, Iowa, November 12, 1912 and is buried in Glendale Cemetery of that city.

[2] Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 36-37.

church since he was now a colporteur in the Augustana Synod, his informal, lively and evangelistic appeal stirred his listeners, especially those who had experienced a spiritual awakening in Sweden.[1] The question of a mission society exclusively for "devout believers"--i. e., Christians who have experienced conversion --was again revived. Unsuccessfully Pastor Carlsson is said to have attempted to dissuade his members. At a meeting in the home of Martin Sundin on December 26, 1868, the Evangelical Lutheran Mission or (Missionary Association), was organized.[2] The members of this Association were also members of the Immanuel church. Their meetings consisted of singing and preaching and were arranged so as not to interfere with those of the church.[3] Pastor Carlsson served at their first communion service, held in conjunction with a series of special meetings or mission meetings in July, 1869.[4] This group went on record in declaring their relationship to the Lutheran church by stating that none was permitted to preach at their gatherings unless he adhered to the Lutheran doctrine and the Augsburg confession.[5]

Shortly after the organizational meeting, the Association engaged the services of C. J. Lindahl, a colporteur and brother to the Augustana Lutheran pastor, S. P. A. Lindahl. Lindahl had formerly been serving the Immanual church as city missionary, but had been dismissed by the church because of his "hyper-evangelical view" and his distribution of copies of the Pietisten and other Rosenian tracts of free-church tendencies. After a service of five months, he was succeeded by J. M. Sanngren, also a colporteur in the Augustana Synod. Uncertain as to whether he should

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[1] Ibid., cf. Youngquist's account, Hem-Missionären, June, 1892.

[2] Protokollbok, Nordsidans Missions Församling, December 26, 1868.

[3] During the first half year of their existence as an Association, their Sunday morning service was held from 8-10 o'clock. By the month of July, 1869, they were held from 10-11:30. In many other ways the Association began to show signs of a complete independence from the mother church.

[4] Diamond Jubilee, First Mission Covenant Church of Chicago, Illinois, Commemoration Day, December 26, 1944, p. 7.

[5] Ibid.

accept this call in view of the greater insecurity of his new position and the smaller remuneration, Sanngren was influenced in his decision by the unfriendly attitude of some Augustana pastors who upbraided him for his friendly attitude to the members of the Mission Association. One of them is said to have expressed his indignation thus:

> We have permitted you to travel in our churches like a professor, but from now on I shall resist you and place you where neither sun nor moon will shine on you.[1]

To this threat Sanngren replied: "That thou doest do quickly."[2]

Johan Magnus Sanngren, son of a well-to-do farmer, was born in Alsheda parish, Småland, Sweden, July 4, 1837. Of a lively, impulsive, and carefree disposition, Sanngren is said to have spent his early youth in sin and dissipation. At the age of twenty, he was converted and at once turned his energy and enthusiasm into spiritual channels. After two years of studies at the A. P. Ahlberg's Mission Institute, he served as itinerant pastor in eastern Småland. In 1868 he migrated to America and was engaged as a colporteur and itinerant preacher by the Augustana Synod. At the time of his call to the pastorate of the Association, he was serving as home missionary at Altona, Illinois, for the Lutheran church.[3] Accepting a second call, he began his ministry in Chicago, May, 1869.[4]

Gradually the difference of opinion between the dissenters, or members of the Association, and the leadership of the Immanual church crystalized into a distinct cleavage. This cleavage is seen in the topics for debate scheduled at the first series of

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[1] Missionsförsamlingen på Norr, Chicago. En Minnesskrift utgiven vid dess femtioårsjubileum, 1919, p. 19.

[2] Ibid. See also John 13: 27.

[3] C. V. Bowman, "Pastor J. M. Sanngren. Den förste missions predikanten i Chicago. Några drag ur hans liv och verksamhet." Unpublished manuscript Mission Covenant Archives. See also Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 37-39.

[4] Sanngren was extended a call before Lindahl, but declined on the ground of the insecurity of the new position as compared to the safety of his position under the Synod. His salary was also to be smaller, amounting to only $30.00 per month.

mission meetings ever held among the Swedes in America. Though sponsored by the Association, the meetings were conducted in the church in July, 1869. In attendance were people not only from Chicago but also from Galesburg, Princeton, and other places in Illinois and Iowa. C. A. Björk came from Swede Bend, Iowa, Peter Undeen from Rockford, and John Peterson from Geneseo, Illinois. Erland Carlsson, G. Peters, A. Hult and others represented the Lutheran clergy.[1] One of the Lutheran ministers suggested that the following questions be placed on the program:

> When we have both ministers and churches among our Swedish people, as well as much preaching and much written Word of God, what reasons can be given for the need of a missionary association?[2]

This question immediately brought a counter-question from the dissenters:

> What is the reason for the spiritual deadness which prevails among our Swedish people, even though we have both pastors and churches?[3]

The debate that ensued was pointed and heated and was not conducive to harmony between the opposing camps. On the other hand it brought to the surface the tension that existed and revealed the impossibility of union between Augustana and the dissenters, or Mission Friends, as they were being called. The following statement by Bowman is revealing:

> That some of the representatives of the Mission Society did not always show due deference during the discussion, but on the contrary were guilty of much that was unseemly, this they later realized and admitted. Especially a former student from Augustana College, it was said, made a vicious attack on the teaching and life of the pastors. After his irritating talk, he took his hat and left the church in a huff. When he was gone, someone exclaimed in a broad Wärmland brougue, 'We must excuse our young friend for being a little too Lutheran.' At that point Pastor Carlsson took the floor, declaring that if that was the sort of men the new mission societies were to put into the field, the churches would most likely be closed to their workers. This disturbing and unpleasant episode was disapproved by the Mission Friends. Several took exception to the improper conduct of the student and sought to exonerate the society. On the other hand, the Lutheran pastors took part in the discussion with calm self-control and showed unexpected consideration for their opponents. . . . .This memorable and interesting mission meeting came to be of very great

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[1] Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 41-42.

[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

> significance not only for the society already formed in Chicago, but for the entire field, for thereby it was made generally known that now there existed a freer spiritual movement than the Augustana Synod.[1]

Soon the Mission Association moved from its rented quarters into their own building. At the dedicatory services, October 3, 1869, Dwight L. Moody, the Evangelist, Pastor Erland Carlsson, and John G. Princell, then a student at the old University of Chicago, participated, in addition to such dissenting leaders as C. A. Björk of Swede Bend, Iowa, and J. M. Sanngren, the pastor of the group.[2]

Unfortunately the gulf between the mother and the Mission Association was widened because of unfavorable comments made in Gamla och Nya Hemlandet, an Augustana publication, concerning the dedicatory services and the quality of some of the sermons.[3] Moreover, this journal published from time to time unfriendly and critical articles which accentuated the tension already existing. As a result a meeting was called by the Association on December 22, 1869, to discuss the situation. The opinion prevailed that the union between the Augustana Synod and the Immanuel Church and the Mission Association could no longer be maintained.[4] In the meantime the dissenters began to observe the Lord's Supper independently of the Lutheran clergy and formulated plans for the in-

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[1] See C. A. Bowman, Missionsvännerna i Amerika. En återblick på deras uppkomst och första verksamhetstid (Minneapolis Veckoblad Publishing Co., 1907), p. 61. I have used the translation made by Ernst W. Olson, Olof Olsson, pp. 144-45. Compare the informative account given by Youngquist who tells us that the mission society had sought synodical permission for their colporteurs to speak in the Swedish Lutheran churches. Impressed by the scene created by the young student, Pastor Carlsson thereupon gives the opinion quoted above. See Hem-Missionären, June, 1892.

[2] Ibid., pp. 44-45. Compare Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, July, 1892.

[3] October, 1869, P. Colseth wrote an article belittling the idea of having Princell, a Swedish immigrant, addressing a Swedish immigrant audience in English. Other critical articles by the editor continued to appear from time to time. See Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, July, 1892.

[4] Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 44-45. Also the Diamond Jubilee Anniversary, First Covenant Church, Chicago, pp. 10-11.

corporation of the Association in order to be empowered to license preachers. As a result, on March 24, 1870, a certificate of incorporation was secured for the Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Association of Chicago by which the Association was "authorized and commanded to take, accept, and receive donations and bequests and to dispense all charities committed to it."[1] Thus, secession had become a reality.

The Mission Association in Chicago soon became recognized by other religious bodies. Thus the older group of dissenters at Swede Bend, Iowa, at a meeting in June, 1869, decided to send its pastor, C. A. Björk, to the mission meetings in Chicago to request membership for the Swede Bend group as a branch in the Association, to secure information as to their opinion regarding officiating by lay preachers at communion and baptismal services, and, in general, to get better acquainted with the Chicago group.[2] The minutes of the Chicago Association also reveal that the Swede Bend Association requested license from them for C. A. Björk.[3] This request was granted on the condition that Björk would be present at the mission meeting in May.[4] Accordingly, Björk was present and received his license, and the notation is made in the minutes of May 23, 1870, that fifty license blanks should be printed, an indication that they were expecting other preachers to seek licenses from the Chicago Association.[5]

The leaders, however, evidently were not satisfied that mere licensing was sufficient for the performance of such ministerial duties as officiating at communion and baptismal services as all of them had come out of a background which called for an ordained ministry to administer the sacraments. After much discussion and prayer it was decided to seek ordination for J. M.

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[1] Ibid., see also Missionsförsamlingen på Norr, Chicago, pp. 29-30. The incorporation was secured for a period of twenty years. The name was later changed to Svenska Evangeliska Missionsförsamlingen på Norr, Chicago, and this in turn was changed to the First Covenant Church, Chicago. See the Jubilee pamphlets.

[2] Protokoll för Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missions-föreningen i Swede Bend, June, 1869.

[3] Protokoll för Svenska Evangeliska Missionsföreningen på Norr, Chicago, April 25, 1870.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid., May 23, 1870.

Sanngren, the pastor, in accordance with the New Testament usage. This, they felt, should be done by someone already ordained so as to carry out the idea of apostolic succession. To that end they applied to the Synod of Northern Illinois and requested that the Reverend Charles Anderson, member of that synod and pastor of the Second Lutheran Church of Galesburg, be instructed to ordain Sanngren. This request was granted and the ordination took place in 1869.[1] The next year Sanngren ordained C. A. Björk. Thus a new type of religious leadership had been produced, one in which the educational qualification was not of first-rank importance. It should be added, however, that while Sanngren could claim some secular education, Björk had a large measure of native talent.

Thus we find that the Mission Association in Chicago, even before it was incorporated, had assumed an important position of leadership among the dissenting groups scattered over the entire country. Other mission societies looked to the Chicago group for guidance and counsel. In 1870, Sanngren, pastor of the Association, was given a leave of absence to visit the many groups that had been founded throughout the country and to give direction to the entire movement in its formative period.[2]

The Covenant Mission Church at Princeton, Illinois, arose through personal work among the members of the Swedish Lutheran church. Led by S. P. Lundholm, his wife, and his brother-in-law, John Hagberg, converts from the great revivals in Sweden, small cottage prayer meetings were conducted as early as 1863. Both at such meetings and in his daily work, Lundholm would testify to his religious experiences with the result that many were converted. Among the first were Jonas Person and C. G. Swanson, who were to become pioneer leaders of the group. By 1868, arrangements were made to conduct their meetings in a little school house five miles outside of Princeton. Visiting laymen often "brought messages of joy and encouragement" to these meetings. In the fall of 1868, C. P. Mellgren, a converted tailor, who like Paul "sewed to live

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[1] Neither the minutes of the Mission Society in Swede Bend nor the Mission Association in Chicago record these important matters. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 47; Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, July, 1892.

[2] Diamond Jubilee, First Mission Covenant Church, p. 11.

and lived to preach," moved to Princeton and became the spiritual leader of the Mission Friends.[1]

As elsewhere, the Lutheran church did not understand or appreciate the value of these informal gatherings and sought to discourage them. As a result, misunderstanding and friction developed. The Mission Friends, however, continued to meet in the hope that their church would soon realize its need for a spiritual movement. When it became obvious that this realization would not take place, they organized their own congregation, on December 14, 1868, under the name of The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Missionary Association of Princeton, Illinois (Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missionsföreningen).[2] "In the light of a kerosene lamp, thirty-two men and women signed the document which made them charter members of the infant church." No church board was elected, but C. G. Swanson was appointed chairman and was inaugurated to office by prayer and the laying on of hands.[3] From this humble beginning, the Princeton church grew steadily in numbers until, by 1877, it included 120 members. That year, E. A. Skogsbergh, the Swedish evangelist who had come to the Mission churches in Chicago, held meetings in Princeton, resulting in a revival "of such magnitude and intensity that few of the Swedish people were untouched." Consequently, the membership of the church was increased immediately to 230.[4]

The greater number of churches had their origin in personal work rather than in a movement of secession from the local Lutheran church. In the majority of cases, the Mission Friends may have been members of that church but had either dropped out or permitted their memberships to lapse. In some cases, the work

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[1]The Lundholms had brought with them many copies of the periodical, Pietisten, which they loaned to all who would promise to read. They also took these along when visiting and read from them. Seventy-fifth Anniversary, 1868-1943, Mission Covenant Church Princeton, Illinois. See Youngquist's account, Hem-Missionären, May, 1892.

[2]Ibid., pp. 9-10. [3]Ibid.

[4]"We continued far into the nights, praying and speaking with sinners. The enemy invented all kinds of stories about me and the work, as is always true when the Word is victorious. This helped God's cause rather than hindered it. Expressions of joy in the Lord and songs of salvation were often heard in the homes and on the streets." Skogsbergh, cited ibid,, p. 13.

of the mother church progressed to such an extent that it became necessary to organize another. That was the case, for example, in Chicago where the Tabernacle Covenant was organized to meet a long felt need. At the time of the founding of the Mission Covenant Church on the north side of Chicago, there were already several Mission Friends on the south side as well. In the beginning, these friends attended the meetings on the north side and in due time joined the congregation there. J. M. Sanngren, the pastor, would visit often the small group of believers on the south side as they met in their homes for devotional meetings. When the great Chicago fire in October, 1871, destroyed the little Mission church on the north side and left the worshippers without a church home, the group conducted their meetings in a hall rented on the south side.[1] After the new church had been erected on the north side, the south side people continued to support this work until 1876. That year, the Swedish evangelist, E. August Skogsbergh was called also to the south side where his preaching was so effective that the Mission Friends there began to plan the establishment of their own congregation. Skogsbergh's meetings were held in a lodge hall, and before he had concluded his series of sermons all of the officials of the lodge had been converted. At this point the group on the south side secured permission of the parent group to establish their own congregation and in February, 1877, a group of Mission Friends organized the Swedish Mission Tabernacle Congregation, Chicago, Illinois.[2]

Another mode of origin is represented by the founding of

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[1]This hall was located at Archer and Wentworth Avenues.

[2]The charter members numbered fifty. In the fall of 1877, this small but stalwart group dedicated their first church building whose auditorium had a seating capacity of 1400. As usual the group was incorporated under the name of Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Association of Chicago on the south side; a second recording in 1901 gives the name of The Swedish Mission Tabernacle, and a third recording of 1937 as The Tabernacle Covenant Church, the present name. (See Incorporation Records No. 176018 and 3064686, City Hall, Chicago, Illinois. For a complete record of the Tabernacle Covenant Church, see Minnesskrift, Svenska Missions-Tabernakelförsamlingens Femtioars-Jubileum 1877-1927, Chicago, Illinois; also, Ett Fjärdedels Sekel, Svenska Missions-Tabernakel-Församlingen, Chicago, Illinois.

the Covenant Church at Sioux City, Iowa. As far as is known, an Augustana pastor, S. P. A. Lindahl, was the first Swedish pastor to visit Sioux City in 1870 when he preached to the Swedish settlement in the latter part of December. Lindahl, however, discouraged any organizational meeting because he felt that those agitating for a congregation at this time were not Christians. Lindahl was followed by two Norwegian pastors, one of whom founded a Scandinavian Lutheran church.[1] The more permanent preliminary work among the Swedes was actually done in the spring of 1871 by C. A. Björk, then a pastor of the Swede Bend-Pilot Mound congregations and circuit preacher in the state. He was assisted in this work in 1872 by John Peterson, pastor of the Des Moines congregation. Finally in 1873, a church was organized by Charles Anderson,[2] the former pastor at Galesburg, Illinois, who had come to the pastorate of the Swedish Lutheran church at Keokuk, Iowa, and to the presidency of the Mission Institute in that city. Soon after the founding of the church, the question of synodical affiliations arose. The Augustana Synod began to take an active interest and agitated for affiliation with their synod. The Mission Friend element of the constituency, however, voted to affiliate with the Mission Synod, which had been organized a few months earlier in Keokuk.[3] There-

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[1] G. N. Swan, Svenskarna i Sioux City. Några blad ur deras historia (Chicago: Jacobson Printing Company, 1912), pp. 18-22.

[2] Ibid., see also Svenska Missions-församlingen i Sioux City, Iowa. Ett trettioårsminne, utgiven vid jubelfesten den 22-25 oktober, 1903, pp. 7-11.

[3] According to the incorporation papers, the church was to be connected with a "regularly constituted Evangelical Lutheran synod affiliated with the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States." It is clear that Anderson did not desire to have the congregation join the Augustana Synod, when he himself was a member of the Synod of Northern Illinois and of the General Synod. Moreover, Anderson had been the prime mover in the establishment of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission which was actually made into the Swedish Mission Synod at Keokuk. For unknown reasons Anderson was not given a place on the executive board of the new synod and withdrew; nevertheless he stated that he had intentions of uniting with it at a later date. He had also labored for the affiliation of the Mission Synod with the General Synod but failed. The official name as incorporated was The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sioux City, Iowa. Swan, op. cit., pp. 34-40.

upon the Augustana sympathizers withdrew to organize their own congregation.

The year 1868 marks the opening of Swedish migration to Kansas. Great Swedish settlements were formed especially in the Smoky River area. The Mission Friends were the actual founders of many of these communities, for many of the settlers had been influenced by the great revivals in Sweden. With the completion of the western railroads crossing the state of Kansas, the immigrants were afforded a great opportunity to acquire valuable land at low prices. An organization known as the "First Swedish Land Company" was formed, whose membership of one hundred was limited to those who could testify to an inner religious experience.[1] The aim of the company was twofold: to acquire land on which to establish homes, and to enjoy religious freedom. To that end the company purchased some 14,000 acres of land in the vicinity of Lindsborg. Moreover, many of the settlers took up homesteads and in this way the Swedes acquired large tracts of lands, especially in McPherson and Saline Counties.

As early as 1869 these Christian pioneers met for religious services, at times in the home of C. R. Carlsson, a Pietist, and occasionally in the "company house" built for the employees of the company. They had no minister, but someone would read from Pietisten or from religious tracts or books by Rosenius and Luther. At times, C. R. Carlsson, who had been a teacher and itinerant preacher in Sweden, would preach. After a time[2] they agreed to

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[1] J. Ferm was elected chairman of the company and S. P. Lindgren, secretary. The first business meeting held in Chicago, Illinois, April 17, 1868, was officially opened by Scripture reading and prayer. Other leaders in this venture were C. R. Carlsson, D. Johnson, Carl Lindberg, August P. Brandt; these were soon joined by such Mission Friends as J. P. Fredrickson, J. F. Pohlhammar, J. A. Pihl, Magnus Carlson, Sven Anderson, Gustaf Staf, and others. See Nils Heiner, "Församlingshistorik, Lindsborg, Kansas," Strödda drag ur missionsvännernas verksamhet i Kansas och Missouri. (Utgiven av Kansas Svenska Evangeliska Missionskonferens, 1917), pp. 24-25; see also Ernst William Olson, Olof Olson. The Man, His Work, and His Thought (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1941), Chap. V, "Founding the Lindsborg Settlement," pp. 55-67.

[2] At the time of Carlsson's departure from Sweden, Olsson had, according to Heiner, expressed a desire to migrate to America where he could minister in accordance to his conscience. Stephenson, however, gives Norelius credit for bringing Olsson to America. He quotes Olsson as saying, "I am glad that I am free from the

call a minister to care for the spiritual need of the community. On the recommendation of Carlsson, Olof Olsson, a warm supporter of the free religious movement in Sweden and a minister in the Established Church, was extended the call. Olsson responded in the affirmative and arrived in the community in the summer of 1869. With him came about two hundred and fifty immigrants, most of whom settled at Lindsborg. Pastor Olsson soon became the recognized leader in the community and by his side stood C. R. Carlsson as advisor. The colony was also visited by such Mission Friend preachers as C. J. Magnuson of Indiana, C. P. Mellgren of Princeton, and J. M. Sanngren of Chicago, Illinois, H. Blom of Des Moines and C. A. Björk of Swede Bend, Iowa.[1]

The congregation of which Olson was the pastor remained independent for some time but, finally, upon his advice, affiliated with the Augustana Synod. This step led to tension and schism within the church and was one of the factors which led to the organization of a branch Sunday school and finally an independent church a few miles northeast of Lindsborg. Several families living an appreciable distance from the church felt that the work should be extended in their direction. Some of these families were members of Olsson's congregation. The Sunday school organized in 1873, was a marked success and inspired the group to form a free Lutheran Mission church which they named Rose Hill.[2]

In the meantime the theological controversy in Sweden re-

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bonds and chains of the state church. I have never taken so much abuse from anyone as I took from the Swedish archbishop for the offense of having preached the Word of God wherever opportunity presented itself." See Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . .pp. 298-99. Cf. Heiner, op. cit., p. 26. See also Ernst William Olson, Olof Olsson, for an interesting discussion as to the factors that led to Olsson's emigration.

[1]Blom appears to be the only one of these pastors who gained admittance to the Lutheran church, but his sermon is said to have displeased Olsson. Heiner, op. cit.

[2]The first board consisted of A. P. Brandt, J. P. Fredrickson, J. F. Pohlhammar, S. P. Lindgren, and J. A. Pihl. A church was built and completed the following year. It still stands as a memorial to these sturdy pioneers. See Heiner, op. cit., p. 29; see also an unpublished letter in the Covenant Archives from S. O. Lindgren to Theodore W. Anderson, giving an intimate picture of the founding of the church at Rose Hill.

garding the atonement had also reached Lindsborg. Olsson came into possession of the issue of the Pietisten in which Waldenström had published his now famous sermon on the atonement. The next Sunday morning he urged his members to meet in a private home, as he had some important matters which he wanted to share with them. At this meeting he read Waldenström's sermon and warned his members against the Waldenströmian "heresy." This attitude immediately precipitated a religious controversy which reverberated in the community during many years. Disagreement resulted between the minister and many of his most intimate friends;[1] synodical meetings pronounced judgment in favor of the pastor and many of the "heretics" were dismissed while others withdrew.[2] As a result about fifty members, many of whom had been organizers of both community and church, severed their connection with the Lutheran church. For a while they joined forces with the group at Rose Hill which in the meantime had grown considerably in numerical strength. Finally, the group decided that the work at Rose Hill should con-

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[1]Actual theological debates between Olsson and such pioneers as C. R. Carlsson, D. Johnson, J. Ferm, J. Nelson, and others preceded the formal secession from the church. Ibid., p. 30.

[2]Ibid. Illustrative of the crisis is the part played by C. R. Carlsson, prominent from the founding of the settlement and intimate friend of the pastor. Together with his wife, Carlson asked for dismissal from the church on the ground that (1) they had been warned and censured for receiving in their home preachers outside the Lutheran denomination whom they nevertheless held to be true Christian teachers, (2) Carlsson had been severely reprimanded by the congregation on the charge of misinterpreting its holy faith and doctrine, (3) he had been unwilling to pledge loyalty to the Augustana Synod. . . . .In a written statement, Carlsson promised to remain a supporting member of the church if the council would permit him to entertain in his home Christian teachers of other denominations and to support missions of his own choice; moreover, he agreed to invite the pastor and the board of deacons to be present and pass on the orthodoxy of any such preachers visiting his home. In its response the board made the following statement: 'That Church Council can not on its own behalf, neither on behalf of the congregation, grant the request of Mr. Carlson. Those persons who have so requested are therefore dismissed from membership, but should Mr. Carlsson or any of the others desire to join the congregation later without setting up specific conditions, they will be welcome to do so.' See Olson, Olof Olsson, p. 76.

tinue and that in addition a work should be started in town. Thus a church building was erected in Lindsborg and dedicated in the spring of 1876.[1]

Several other Mission churches in Kansas date their origin from 1870-1871. H. Blom, the pioneer preacher from Madrid and Des Moines, labored in Enterprise, New Gottland, and Salina, with the result that congregations were organized. He also preached in the vicinity of what is now McPherson, where a church was organized and one of its members, Pete Holm, was installed as leader in the absence of a pastor. Among other congregations organized during the first part of the '70's were those at Brantford, Osage City, Salemsborg, and Garfield Center.[2]

In the eastern states, only a comparatively small number of Swedish immigrants had settled prior to 1870. We have already mentioned the work among the Swedish immigrants by the Swedish Methodist missionary, Olof G. Hedström. Gustaf Palmquist was another pioneering missionary among the Swedish Baptists who labored both in the east and west. Mention should also be made of the J. Swanström family which arrived in Brooklyn in 1848. An American group engaged Swanström as a city missionary with the result that the mission became a center of independent work. The Lutherans also began work in New York and Brooklyn and in Campello (Brockton) Massachusetts, prior to 1870. While these congregations were independent of the Augustana Synod, they were, nevertheless, served by Lutheran pastors.[3]

The Gustavus Adolphus church in New York is of interest to us because of the role it played in the freer religious movement of the day.[4] The leader of this work was the Reverend John G.

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[1] Ibid., p. 32. It should be noted that the Lindsborg Mission church originated largely out of a theological controversy.

[2] For the detailed story of these churches, the reader is referred to Strödda drag ur missionsvännernas historia i Kansas och Missouri.

[3] A. P. Nelson, Svenska Missionsvännernas i Amerika historia. Första delen. De svenska kongregationalisterna. (Minneapolis: A. P. Nelsons förlag, 1906), pp. 30-40.

[4] The inception of this church dates back to the missionary attempts by C. P. Agrelius and the activities of Unonius. It was organized in 1865 by Erland Carlsson and Andreas Andren, represen-

Princell, a Lutheran pastor who had attended Augustana College, the old University of Chicago, and the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. In 1872 he was ordained by the Augustana Synod. While a student at Philadelphia, Princell was called upon to fill the pulpit of the Campello church. After his ordination, he became the permanent pastor of the church.[1] His pastorate at Campello was very brief and he went from thence to the Gustavus Adolphus Church in New York in 1873.[2] During his ministry a revival swept the congregation which in the course of time was to constitute one of the factors that led to a schism within the church.

A keen student and close observer, Princell followed with much interest the theological debate which at this time stirred Sweden. It led him to do his own investigating. By 1876 he had come to the conclusion that the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement was Scripturally correct. Because of this he was accused of heresy at the annual meeting of the Augustana Synod at Princeton, Illinois, in 1878. Subjected to something akin to an inquisition by the ministerium who demanded that he give his doctrinal position officially, he requested a year in which to re-examine all the points involved. When his request was denied, he presented a brief statement of his doctrinal views regarding the atonement. The statement was termed heretical by the ministerium and he was suspended until he would retract his heresy. Princell then asked for a letter of dismissal from the synod. This was refused and instead he was unfrocked by the ministerium the following year.[3]

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tatives of the Augustana Synod. The members, however, were lukewarm toward the Augustana Synod whose pastors were too much like "läsare." Through the office of Peter Wieselgren in Sweden, the Swedish church sent Axel Waetter to minister to the flock. Upon Waetter's return to Sweden in 1872, Princell was called to the pulpit. Stephenson, Religious Aspects, pp. 229-32.

[1] Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 7-26.

[2] Nelson, op. cit., pp. 42-46; also Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 23-30.

[3] Augustana Synodens Protokoll, 1878 and 1879. It is interesting to note that one of the pastors to report against Princell was Olof Olsson, the former pastor at Lindsborg and now President of Augustana College, one who in his early years had

Princell also held definite convictions with regard to church membership, recognizing only true Christians as eligible to church membership and participation in the Lord's Supper. In his attempted reform within the Gustavus Adolphus Church, he soon met organized opposition by members who believed in the pattern of the Swedish state church. His resignation was demanded.[1] As a result, a schism followed which led to secession of those who agreed with his position. The seceders organized themselves into a new congregation, entirely independent of synodical affiliations, under the name of the Bethesda Mission Church.[2]

In the beginning of 1879, a great revival was sweeping the Lutheran church at Campello. During the vacancy of the pulpit, C. W. Holm, a layman and close friend of Princell, was asked to have charge of the meetings. Under his leadership, a far reaching revival visited the congregation. Holm called upon his friend and former pastor, Princell, to come and assist in the revival. Princell immediately responded and together they had the privilege to see a rich ingathering for the kingdom of God.[3]

Shortly afterwards Princell was called to the pastorate of the Campello church. He accepted the call with the understanding that he would be permitted to visit Sweden before assuming his pastoral duties. In Princell's absence a student from Augustana College filled the pulpit. The spiritual fare was evidently meager, for during the interim, the believers met in homes for devotional meetings. Moreover, the church extended a call to

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held somewhat liberal views and who in later years was subjected to a similar inquisition before the same ministerium. See Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . . ., pp. 275-76. Princell's Levnadsminnen, pp. 42-49, contains all the documents relating to his trial and dismissal.

[1]Nelson, op. cit., pp. 47-49; also Princell, op. cit., pp. 53-79.

[2]Nelson, op. cit., p. 50. Among Princell's most ardent supporters were Mr. and Mrs. M. Anderson who had come to America in 1872. Converts from Sweden, they never hid their "light under a bushel." In 1876 they returned to Sweden for a visit and came into contact with the new spiritual movement that had swept Sweden in their absence. With new zeal they returned to America and joined the church of which their friend Princell was the pastor. See Nelson, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

[3]Ibid., pp. 52-54. Also Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 82-85.

E. August Skogsbergh, who had conducted successful revival meetings in the newly founded Bethesda Church of New York, to conduct similar meetings at Campello. Skogsbergh's visit resulted in a far reaching revival. Other preachers were called in from time to time. Among them was the pioneer, Adam Lidman.[1]

The revival in the Campello church, however, did not meet with the approval of many of the members and leaders of the church. Opposed to the revival as well as to the pastor elect, Princell, they annulled his call to the church over the vigorous protests of his friends. Thus, when Princell returned in October, 1879, to preach his inaugural sermon, he was refused admittance to the pulpit. Thereupon, he was called to preach to the group of friends who left the church. Later they organized an independent Mission Church. He also ministered to the friends of the Bethesda Church in New York until 1880, when he accepted the presidency of the Ansgar College.[2]

These are typical illustrations of the religious conflicts within the Augustana Lutheran churches, conflicts which often resulted in secession from the mother church and the establishment of free congregations or mission societies. These mission societies or associations as they were generally called at first, became independent congregations and finally emerged as Mission Covenant churches. Many of the mission societies never had formal affiliation with the Augustana churches but sprang up wherever a group of pietistically inclined individuals happened to settle. In the beginning, the majority of these individuals had come from the great Rosenian revivals that were sweeping Sweden at this time. Many had been members of the mission societies and sacramental unions which the converts had established there under the framework of the Fatherland Foundation. Arriving in America and finding that the Augustana churches were in many instances as high churchly as the State Church, they pursued an independent course

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[1] Princell, op. cit., pp. 82-89; Nelson, op. cit., pp. 54-56. During his eastern preaching tour, Skogsbergh was depicted in the Swedish-American press as a villain and adventurer, more fit to entertain in a variety show in the Bowery district than to preach the gospel. The public was warned to stay away from his meetings. Princell, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

[2] Ibid., pp. 92-94; Nelson, op. cit., pp. 56-59.

and organized groups in all of the frontier states--such as Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, Michigan, and Nebraska. These groups usually emerged as Mission churches.

One of the chief means of propagating the interest of the mission societies or associations scattered over the country were the mission meetings, which were often similar to Methodist camp meetings. The first one of these was held by the Mission Association in Chicago on July 5-6, 1869. Others were conducted with much success in Swede Bend or Ridgeport, Iowa, on June 24-25, 1870, and in the following year at Keokuk, Iowa; in June one was held at Princeton and in October one at Galesburg, Illinois. Though sponsored by individual groups, the participants came from long distances and included both laymen and clergy. There was no "guest speaker" or "conference speaker," but all the pastors and colporteurs were generally given an opportunity to preach a sermon or two. In addition to the preaching, much of the time was taken up by discussion of Biblical questions. A temporary organization consisting of a presiding chairman and secretary was usually set up, and questions were handed in and taken up in order. As a rule such questions as "What does it mean to walk in the 'Light'?" or "How do we know that we have the Spirit of God?" were propounded and discussed. The evening services often became great revival meetings. The descriptive language of Miss Winslow may be applied to these sermons during which the preachers went up and down the village streets pointing their fingers "accusingly at one house after another, unearthing secret sins and holding them up for all to see."[1] These meetings as well as the revival services in the churches often became scenes of excitement as "the saved rejoiced and the unsaved agonized to join them." They served to accentuate an idea as old as Christianity, that religion is an individual, inner experience of surpassing worth. These meetings also encouraged lay exhortations, urging new converts to tell their experiences publicly, thereby bringing others to repentance. All these revival efforts revitalized afresh the religious experiences of the believers and gave to the doctrines and forms of the church an intensely new personal meaning. In the

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[1]Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758. A Biography (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), p. 162.

words of Dr. Sweet, they can be characterized as "representing rapids in the stream," new cascades of religious experience.[1] Moreover, these meetings proved to be important determinants for the non-conformist groups, as they brought the dissenters together, created a common type of religious worship and expression, furnished a bond of kinship and fellowship between the various groups, and gave direction to the work during its formative stages.

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[1] William Warren Sweet, Revivalism in America. Its Origin, Growth and Decline (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), Preface, p. xv.

CHAPTER XI

PRE-COVENANT SYNODS

The Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission

By 1871 the participants in these mission meetings began to discuss the advisability of a union of all the mission societies since efforts had been made to discredit the licenses issued by the Missionary Association in Chicago because of its local character. It was increasingly felt that the responsibility for licensing men should rest on all the societies combined. As a result of this feeling, Rev. Charles Anderson, at a mission meeting at Princeton, Illinois, June 3-5, 1871, presented for discussion the following proposition:

> Since the Lord during the last two years has blessed the mission work so richly, we believe the time has come for the appointing of a so-called Executive Board which should superintend all present and future societies; each, however, if so desired, should have its own constitution but there should be a common confession with regard to teaching.[1]

After a brotherly discussion, the delegates left without formulating any definite plan. But the question came up again persistently. An invitation, signed by Rev. C. J. Lindahl, Rev. A. M. Larson, and A. J. Blixt on May 10, 1871, calling for a meeting at Keokuk, Iowa, June 29, 1871, reads as follows:

> The undersigned herewith invite all Christian brethren in the faith and friends of mission who desire a closer union for the spreading of the gospel and the furtherance of laymen's activities among our Scandinavian people to a united mission meeting at Keokuk, Iowa, Thursday, June 29, for the purpose of counseling together regarding the best way to establish a Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod. We believe that not a few of our friends recognize with us the need of such a union.[2]

To this announcement which appeared in Zions Baner, Anderson, the editor, added the following statement:

We hardly need to announce to our people that there are

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[1] Zions Banér, August, 1871. [2] Ibid., July, 1871.

> those among our Swedish people who do not desire or want to join with any of the present synods. We say this without desiring to place ourselves in judgment over anyone. . . . . The above invitation aims at a closer union or affiliation between these brethren. Union gives strength; separation weakens. These friends need each other's counsel and help. The weakness and poverty which prevail in many places demand a bit of encouragement from friends far away. Moreover, confidence in one another and a sharing in one another's trouble is needed. In order to have confidence and thus to share, acquaintance is necessary; and for a knowledge of the spirit, the opinions, etc., of one another, a united meeting is necessary. Each layman and minister has the same freedom, the same rights. Such an association was called a synod by the old fathers.[1]

It is thus apparent that it was the aggressive pastor at Galesburg, who was the constructive genius behind the many attempts at a union of the non-conformists.[2]

At a mission meeting at Galesburg, Illinois, October 6-8, 1871, a committee was appointed to prepare plans and constitution for an organization of churches.[3] This committee presented its proposed constitution at a meeting at Keokuk, Iowa, May 8-13, 1872.[4] Eligible members of this meeting were all licensed or ordained ministers, recognized as such by the committee; in addition one or two delegates from each association, society or congregation. The meeting was held with eight pastors and four lay delegates in attendance. Sanngren served as chairman. After some discussion, the meeting voted to establish an association to be called the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission in the United States (Den Skandinaviska Evangeliska Lutherska Missionen i Förenta Staterna).[5] The constitution adopted accepted the Scriptures as

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[1] Ibid.

[2] It is doubtful that the Covenant people of America are conversant with the great debt they owe to the pioneering pastor at Galesburg. Anderson is easily one of the foremost figures in our pioneer days. As a preacher, educator, and organizer, he not only laid the foundation for a denomination, but also gave the Mission Friends their first religious-political newspaper, the Zions Banér, and their first educational institution as well. A brief biographical sketch will be given later in our discussion.

[3] Zions Banér, November, 1872. The members of this committee were Rev. C. Anderson, Galesburg, Rev. John Peterson, Geneseo, and Mr. A. W. Hedenschough, Chicago, Illinois.

[4] Ibid., May, 1872. The meeting was called for May 10, but actually began May 8.

[5] Zions Banér, May, 1872. The Constitution is printed and

the only infallible guide in matters of faith, order and conduct, as well as the Athanasian, Nicean, and Apostolic Creeds, in addition to the unaltered Augsburg Confession as a brief summary of the Scriptures. The aim of the Mission was to propagate the gospel among all people. Franchise was given "pastors and one or two delegates from each congregation or association which is affiliated with this Mission."[1] The local congregations retained complete autonomy, but with the proviso that their constitutions must be in harmony with that of the Mission in regard to the acceptance of the Scriptures, Creeds and Confession. Provision was also made for the establishment of a Mission Institute for the training of ministers and for the publication of a religious periodical. The executive board was to consist of not less than seven nor more than eleven men, who were to meet at least four times a year; these were given power to act on behalf of the Mission, even in the ordination of ministers. All their decisions, however, were to be presented and ratified by the annual meeting of the Mission.[2]

It will be seen that the active and constructive genius behind this new organization was Anderson. In justifying his part in the founding of the Mission he explained that he was prompted in part by the ever increasing demands made upon him for workers, and in part by the incessant criticism concerning the encroachments of synods on the local churches.[3] By way of further explana-

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attached to the cover of the Protokollsbok för Ansgarii-Synoden. This volume contains the official minutes of the Ansgar Synod. It will hereafter be cited Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll.

[1] Zions Banér, May, 1872.

[2] Ibid., June, 1872. In addition to the sponsors, the Revs. C. A. Björk, P. Wedin, C. J. Magnuson, John Peterson, O. P. Mellgren and Messrs. J. C. Sällgren and C. A. Byloff signed the constitution, which was to be presented for ratification to each congregation or mission society.

[3] Wrote Anderson: "At the end of 1868 or the beginning of 1869, a mission society was organized in Chicago. This society after having been legally incorporated, assumed the right to issue licenses to those who were regularly called by the brethren to preach the Word. But the work had spread so rapidly that all who shared in it saw the necessity of founding a larger association, composed of delegates or representatives from all the congregations or societies which have worked together with the Chicago congregation. This step was taken last May 10-13, in Keokuk, Iowa, where a denomination (samfund) was organized under the name of the Scan-

tion, he stated that the new organization was founded on the Bible and the Lutheran confession, and in no way deviated from the old position. It consisted of several congregations or associations banded together for a common aim of carrying on Christian work.[1] At the first annual meeting in Chicago, October 14, 1872, a new executive board, called the Central Executive Board (Central-bestyrelsen), consisting of nine men, was elected and authorized to transact all business between annual meetings, even to the extent of licensing men for the ministry.[2]

After the Chicago meeting, Anderson explained in the Zions Banér that, in accordance with article III of the constitution, the purpose of the Mission was to propagate the gospel, safe-guard all mission activities, join all in a coöperative enterprise, and, finally bring order and system into the work. It was further explained that in order to accomplish this objective, it was necessary (1) to obtain the legal right to ordain pastors and induct them into the ministry, (2) to license gifted individuals to preach, (3) to watch that pastors preached in accordance with the confession of the Lutheran church and performed the sacraments in accordance with the same, (4) to see that congregations which were affiliated with the Mission were served with the gospel and sacraments, etc. The Mission, it was explained, exercised all the legal rights of a synod without taking the name of a synod.[3] Nothing more is recorded about the activities of this organization until the call was issued for a general meeting of pastors and representatives to be held at Keokuk, Iowa, May 21-24, 1873.[4] This meeting, for some unrecorded reason, altered the course of the

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dinavian Lutheran Mission in the United States. Some eight or ten pastors belong to this association and others intend to join." See Zions Banér, November, 1872.

[1]The Keokuk meeting had appointed Anderson, chairman, A. G. Nordengren, secretary, and Peter Englund, treasurer, ibid.

[2]Elected members of the executive Board were C. Anderson, Galesburg, chairman; A. W. Hedenshough, Chicago, Secretary; C. G. Swenson, Princeton, treasurer; other members of the board were Revs. C. A. Björk, Ridgeport, Iowa; J. M. Sanngren, Chicago; John Peterson, Des Moines, Iowa; P. Wedin, Princeton, Illinois; C. J. Magnuson, Lake Station, Indiana; and Mr. M. Sundin. This board was to meet at least four times a year or as often as necessary. Ibid.

[3]Ibid. [4]Ibid., April, 1873.

Mission.[1]

The Mission Synod

When the representatives of the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission in the United States convened at Keokuk, Iowa, May 21, 1873, Anderson, the chairman of the central board did not preside. In his place C. G. Swenson was elected chairman pro tempore. A committee was appointed to examine the proposed constitution, which after a few changes, was accepted.[2] The name was changed to the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod (Den Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Missions-Synoden).[3] Under this name it was incorporated in the State of Iowa.[4] The constitution subscribed to

> . . . .the Holy Scriptures as God's revealed Word and as the only infallible rule and guide for faith and conduct. . . .

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[1] Youngquist states that the election of the Central Executive Board was considered arbitrary by the pastors and that the announcement in Zions Banér that the Board was affiliated with the General Synod aroused a suspicion among the rest of the members. Consequently the Board was dissolved without having ever met. Hem-Missionären, August, 1892. The writer has been unable to verify the charges brought by Youngquist. It appears that everything had been done in a legal and open manner. One is suspicious that a personal bias, at least in part, dictated the charges.

[2] This is evidently the constitution prepared for the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission in the United States which had been sent to the various churches for their ratification. Rev. Peter Unden and Mr. A. W. Hedenschough were the appointed committee to examine the constitution. See Protokoll Bok för den Sw. Ev. Luth. Miss. Synoden, I, 1. These are the original and official minutes of the Mission Synod in two volumes. They will be referred to as Missions-Synodens Protokoll.

[3] Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 1. See also the report in Zions Banér, June, 1873. A new board consisting of eleven men was elected with Rev. J. M. Sanngren, chairman, Mr. A. W. Hedenschough, secretary, and Mr. C. G. Swenson, treasurer. Other members of the board were C. A. Björk, P. Wedin, P. Unden, J. C. Lindell, C. P. Mellgren, John Peterson, Peter Englund, and Wilhelm Youngquist. Representatives were present at this meeting from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Minnesota. See Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, August, 1892.

[4] The following signed the articles of incorporation: J. M. Sanngren, John Peterson, A. Hanson, Wm. Youngquist, C. J. Magnuson, P. Wedin, C. A. Byloff, John Johnson, and F. Pihl. The articles of incorporation are attached to the cover of the book of minutes.

> the three oldest symbolic creeds, the Apostolic, the Nicean, and the Athanasian, and also to the unaltered Augsburg Confession as a brief but true summary of the main teachings of the Bible.[1]

At the first annual meeting in Des Moines,[2] Iowa, the question of an educational institution was discussed. The conference finally decided to request Dr. Waldenström in Sweden to recommend a qualified teacher.[3] This meeting also decided on the publication of a religious and political periodical as a vehicle of expression of the synod. It was to be called The Mission Friend (Missions-Wännen) with the motto "When he was reviled he reviled not again."[4] Shortly afterwards a Sunday school paper, The Little Missionary (Den Lilla Missionären) was also published.[5] At the meeting of the Central Board in January, 1875, it was voted to establish a book store and at the annual meeting in 1876, a hymnal was authorized.[6]

The conference encountered an almost insurmountable difficulty when the question arose of affiliating the new synod with one of the existing Lutheran synods. Anderson agitated for its

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[1]The fact that this article of the constitution could not be changed, was in the course of time to prove a handicap for the synod.

[2]This meeting was represented by the following men: J. M. Sanngren, Chicago; P. Wedin, Princeton, Illinois; C. A. Björk, Swede Bend; J. Peterson, Des Moines, Iowa; C. Mellgren, Osage City, H. Blom, Enterprise, Kansas; other delegates were Gustaf Lundquist, Peter Englund, F. Pihl, John Arvidson, J. P. Lindblad, A. Milldahl, S. Youngquist, and A. W. Hedenschough. Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 7-8.

[3]Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[4]Ibid., pp. 11, 13. A. W. Hedenschough and L. J. Peterson were called as editors of Missions-Wännen. We are adopting the later spelling of Missions-Vännen throughout. It should be noted that the conference ignored both the Mission Institute and the Zions Basun, two of C. Anderson's ventures, and sought to launch their own. In 1882, the Missions-Vännen was sold to a publishing company in Chicago and the Protokoll states that the synod gave a solemn promise not under any circumstances to publish any other periodical. This constituted a safe-guard for the purchasing company against undue competition. See Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 244-48. Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, September, 1892.

[5]This paper was also sold with the Missions-Vännen, see ibid.

[6]Ibid., pp. 11-12.

affiliation as a branch synod under the General Synod in order that it might have moral and financial backing during its formative years. Moreover, he had already taken steps to open the Mission Institute, for which provision had been made in the constitution of the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission, and he desired to secure the support of the General Synod for this educational venture.[1] The majority of the delegates, however, did not at this time see the necessity for an educational institution, nor were they anxious to become a part of a synod known for its liberal position especially as regards the confession and church membership.[2] Disappointed in the lack of vision of the meeting, Anderson withdrew from the deliberations and membership of the synod.[3] The churches at Keokuk, Iowa, and Galesburg, Illinois, withdrew while many others declined to become affiliated. Thus the meeting, in the end, had failed in its announced objective: that of gathering all the free and independent Swedish congregations and groups into one organization.[4] The reason for this failure lay undoubtedly in part in the failure to unite with a strong synod, such as the General Synod. Possibly a more potent reason was the lack of enthusiasm of a great number of the churches

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[1]Anderson contemplated an affiliation with Carthage College, a General Synod institution, and possibly a Scandinavian professorship to attract students from the secondary schools to the college. See Rätta Hemlandet och Augustana, August, 1872; see also C. V. Bowman, "Ansgarius College," Swedish American Bulletin, August, 1929, pp. 21-25.

[2]Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 79-80.

[3]It will be noted that Anderson, the organizing genius among the Swedes, was not even honored with a position on the executive board of the new synod. Other influential pastors such as C. J. Lindahl, J. G. Sjöquist, and S. W. Sundberg also withdrew. At a later date, Anderson states in his paper that though he was a member of the Synod of Northern Illinois, he envisioned the wisdom and desirability of an entirely Swedish synod. "We have therefore decided to join the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod in not too far a distant future and to share with it joys and sorrows. . . . .For several reasons this could not be done at this meeting." Zions Baner, June, 1873; see also Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 2.

[4]It has at times been asserted that Anderson's defeat at Keokuk demonstrated his inability to gather all the Mission Friends into one organization, but that is true only in part, for the policy of the new synod also failed to gather them. See Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 81.

to subscribe to the narrow confessions, for already a spirit of freedom with regard to teaching had become prevalent. Many were convinced of the truth of John Robinson's statement to the Pilgrim Fathers: "The Lord hath more truth and light yet to breake forth out of His holy Word."[1] Hence, they did not desire to be circumscribed by old creeds and especially the Unaltered Augsburg Confession in the interpretation of the Scriptures. This rigid confession was soon to prove a hindrance to the full exercise of the new freedom of thought and interpretation. The mission meetings with their discussion periods of Biblical statements had awakened the dissenters and the Mission Friends to the possible imperfection of the Augsburg Confession as a standard for the interpretation of the Scriptures. They were wholeheartedly devoted to the Scriptures as the sole authority in matters of faith, creed, and conduct, but recognized the possibility of a variety of interpretations growing out of an equally sincere devotion to the Bible. By this time the first impact of the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement and the new religious influences from Sweden had reached the New World. The watchword among the Waldenströmians in Sweden, "Where is it written?" had in a measure become the watchword for the immigrant non-conformist element in America as well. Possibly the revivalist movement in America, especially under Dwight L. Moody, with its free spirit and broad appeal, must also be considered a liberalizing influence in the thinking of the Mission Friends.

Responding to the liberalizing demands of the time, the Mission Synod at its annual meeting in 1876 instructed the Central Board to prepare an amendment to the article of confession, which by constitutional arrangement was not to be changed except by dissolving the synod. The Central Board on January 12, 1877, proceeded to insert the clause, "interpreted in accordance with the plain Word of God" and added by way of explanation John 3: 16. The article now read:

> We believe that the Holy Scripture is God's revealed Word and is the only infallible rule and guide for faith and conduct. We accept and acknowledge not only the three oldest symbolic creeds, the Apostolic, the Nicean, and the Athanasian,

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[1] Ozora S. Davis, John Robinson, with an introduction by Prof. William Walker (Boston: The Pilgrim Press, 1903), p. 246.

> but also the unaltered Augsburg Confession, interpreted in accordance with the plain Word of God, as a brief, but true summary of the main teachings of the Bible.[1]

The new directive only complicated matters, for now the Mission Synod had a confession stating how the Word of God was to be interpreted and an amendment stating how the confession was to be interpreted. The action also became the subject of much criticism by opponents of the synodical organization. J. G. Princell, in a series of persuasive articles, called attention to this violation of the constitution which, said he, nullified the legal existence of the entire synod at the time of the enactment of the amendment.[2] Challenged by repeated criticism, the leaders of the Mission Synod finally appealed for a legal ruling. M. A. DeLany, a lawyer, in a lengthy opinion stated the reasons why the Mission Synod had not in any way forfeited or lost any of its rights or powers by the insertion of the clause which he held to be only explanatory and without legal force.[3]

While the Mission Synod was neither unaffected by the agitation for independence and freedom which was bedoming increasingly prevalent nor entirely indifferent to other contemporary religious movements, its leadership pursued an isolationist course similar to the one taken by the leaders in the Augustana Synod. It was E. August Skogsbergh who, in a large measure, became instrumental in breaking down many of the barriers between Americans and Swedes. Skogsbergh arrived in 1876 in answer to a call extended him by the Mission Church on the north side of Chicago.[4] He had taken no small

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[1] Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 51, 57. See Youngquist Hem-Missionären, November, 1892, for a discussion of the factors involved.

[2] Chicago-Bladet. Kristlig och politisk tidning for svenskarna i Amerika, Chicago, Illinois, February 3, 1885.

[3] Missions-Vännen, August 19, 1885, gives the legal opinion both in English and Swedish.

[4] E. August Skogsbergh, Minnen och upplevelser under min mer än femtioåriga verksamhet (Minneapolis: Veckobladets tryckeri). This is Skogsbergh's autobiography and will be cited as Minnen och upplevelser. For a brief but excellent treatment of Skogsbergh, see Erik Dahlhielm, On the High Tide of Faith, A Sketch of the Life of Erik August Skogsbergh. Reprinted from Our Covenant (Chicago: The Covenant Book Concern, 1940).

part in the revivals which swept Sweden in 1873 and 1876. Though not a university man, Skogsbergh had had sufficient academic training to be considered an educated man. His fame as an evangelist and singer had spread to America even before his arrival. And before the end of his first year in the new land, a revival broke out among his countrymen in Chicago. The revival swept the north side, then the south side and by the end of 1877, it had resulted in the founding of a congregation on the south side and the construction of a church with a seating capacity of 1,400.[1] Within a relatively short time he had reached the Swedish settlements in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, and Minnesota. "In fact," says his biographer, "for the Mission churches in the Middle West, he was from 1877-1884 both an evangelist and a bishop, with headquarters wherever he happened to hang his hat."[2]

Upon his arrival in America, Skogsbergh was welcomed by Dwight L. Moody, the great evangelist, who already had proved to be a friend of the Swedish immigrants.[3] While in Sweden, Skogsbergh had used in his meetings some of Moody's revivalist technique as well as translations of Sankey's songs or Gospel Hymns. Moody's sermons had also been translated into Swedish and were, by this time, read everywhere. Consequently, Moody was no stranger to the immigrant Swedes, many of whom, it is said, were disappointed to find that he was not Swedish as they had supposed. Finding his language and presentation simple, great numbers of them attended his meetings in Farwell Hall and later at the Moody Church, and when the Americans sang "There is a gate that stands ajar," the

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[1] The Tabernacle Covenant Church, Chicago, pp. 59-60.

[2] Dahlhielm, On the High Tide of Faith, p. 11. After the founding of the Covenant, it was at times said that Björk ruled at the annual meetings but Skogsbergh ruled between these meetings.

[3] The Swedes were drawn to Moody from the time of the great Chicago fire, which destroyed their meeting house. Being few and poor at the time, they appealed to Mr. Moody whose Tabernacle was also destroyed. He introduced them to some of his friends in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from whom they received $45.00. An incident is also related about Rev. John Peterson, who had lost all his belongings in the fire. Peterson had just received a call from the Mission Church in Des Moines, Iowa. Entirely destitute he appealed to Mr. Moody for some clothes. Moody had nothing but the long coat of a Catholic priest. He gave Mr. Peterson the coat and in this priestly raiment the Mission Friend preacher met his friends in Des Moines.

Swedes sang "Jag vet en port som öppen står." Many hundreds of these Swedes were soon completely acclimated and remained as members in Moody's church.

Skogsbergh's acquaintance with Moody was soon to ripen into an intimate and lasting friendship. Moody usually introduced Skogsbergh as "the Swedish Moody."[1] By mutual agreement Skogsbergh held his large Sunday afternoon meetings in the Moody Tabernacle, since none of the Swedish places of worship could accommodate the ever increasing audience. Both were often together on programs; Moody conducted one of his last campaigns in Skogsbergh's Tabernacle in Minneapolis, and Skogsbergh, at Moody's invitation, spoke to the Scandinavians at the World's Fair in 1893 during two months.[2] Thus, through the activities of Skogsbergh, the isolationism followed by other leaders in the Mission Synod and among the Mission Friends broke down.

In 1877, Skogsbergh held his first campaign in Minneapolis in the Pence Opera House, all other meeting places providing inadequate room to accommodate the huge crowds.[3] The result was a great revival that swept this frontier town, and a great increase in membership for the local church.[4] By 1884 Skogsbergh assumed the pastorate of this church and immediately proceeded with the erection of a church accommodating 3,000. "What do you think of it?" asked his friend, S. M. Klarquist, of an acquaintance, a wealthy mill owner, who happened by as the walls were rising. Replied the mill owner, "The man who is building this church is

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[1] Skogsbergh, Minnen och upplevelser, p. 251.

[2] Ibid., pp. 250-55.

[3] The Chicago Times, October 7, 1877, reported these meetings as follows: "A young Swedish preacher has during the last months been holding religious services in Minneapolis. Though practically a stranger, he has created an interest among the Swedish people which is unequalled by any in this country. Though practically unannounced, he had attracted gatherings that have packed the largest assembly halls in the city. The young man is E. August Skogsberg from Chicago, who worked with Moody during the Tabernacle meetings in Chicago. He will return to preach there occasionally in his mother tongue."

[4] The congregation immediately set about to purchase a large lot for a new building. The lot was to cost $7,000 and the plan for a new church called for one with a seating capacity of 1,000. Skogsbergh's idea of an auditorium with a seating capacity of about 3,000 seats prevailed, however.

either a big fool or a man of big faith."[1]

In addition to his duties in an ever expanding parish, Skogsbergh continued to give much of his time to the field. Moreover, he founded a weekly religious newspaper, The Swedish Herald (Svenska Härolden),[2] He launched a school, known as the Skogsbergh school, a combination of an upgraded elementary school, a business department, a preparatory division for high school work, and a Bible institute.[3] Skogsbergh was also the founder, and for many years the chairman, of the Swedish Christian Mission Society in the Northwest,[4] the largest conference within the Covenant. Together with A. L. Skoog, Covenant hymn writer, he published a hymnal, Evangelii Basun, especially rich in translations of American songs. In the meantime, he was constantly preaching and singing the gospel message. After five years of ministry in Seattle, Washington, where he built another mammoth Tabernacle, he spent the last twenty years as an itinerant evangelist, the role he best loved.

Skogsbergh is easily entitled to a foremost place as an evangelist, pastor, educator, and friend among the early Mission Friends in America. His greatness as a religious leader is the greatness of one who had a determining part in initiating and directing a popular movement of far-reaching consequences. That which looms even larger was his broad and tolerant attitude in the midst of dogmatic theological quibbling and a narrow and selfish church policy. While he belonged to the Mission Synod, he was on equally good terms with the Ansgar Synod. He knew of no barrier, but worked unceasingly for the coming together of these synods into one association of churches. From the beginning, he

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[1] Dahlhielm, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

[2] Ibid. This paper afterwards merged with the Minneapolis Weekly (Minneapolis Veckoblad), which finally was changed to The Weekly (Veckobladet).

[3] This school became the forerunner of the Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis and North Park College in Chicago. See Missions-Wännen, September 16, 1875, September 8, 1876, July 25, 1894. See also Leland H. Carlson, A History of North Park College (Chicago, 1941), pp. 21-26.

[4] It was founded November 27, 1884 and is now called the Northwestern Conference, Covenant Memories, 1885-1935, pp. 443-47.

formed a lasting friendship with J. G. Princell, another leader of an ecumenical spirit among the Swedes.[1] There is ample evidence that he shared many of Princell's antinomian tendencies. Both Princell and Skogsbergh were accused by Hasselquist of being "spiritual communists" working for the "dissolution of the church."[2] This characterization led the Chicago-Bladet to castigate Hasselquist as an enemy of ecumenicity.[3] It was Skogsbergh who, together with President K. Erixon of Ansgar College, assumed the leading role in the attempts to merge the two synods.[4]

The Ansgar Synod

Defeated in his effort to secure synodical support for his educational venture at the organizational meeting of the Mission Synod, Rev. C. Anderson, the determined and indefatigable former pastor of Galesburg, nevertheless proceeded on his own responsibility and at his own expense, to launch the first educational project among the Swedish immigrant dissenters.[5] Educated in the American schools and with the background of a chaplain during the Civil War, Anderson saw more clearly than did the leaders within the Mission Synod the imperative need for an educational institution to serve the need for an educated clergy among the Swedish dissenters. The latter placed their emphasis on the "inner call" and believed that "preachers are called, not made."[6]

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[1] Skogsbergh, Minnen och upplevelser, p. 136.

[2] Augustana och Missionären, September 1, 1880.

[3] Chicago-Bladet, September 10, 1880.

[4] The Mission Synod and the Ansgar Synod.

[5] The first information of the educational venture planned by Anderson is given in an article in Zions Banér for March, 1873. Provision was also made for such an institution in the constitution of the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Mission in the United States. See Zions Banér, June, 1873.

[6] The Mission Synod which superseded the Evangelical Mission made no provision for an educational institution in their constitution. Thus, Anderson was left without any support, either moral or financial. Nevertheless, he adhered to his original plan which called for a course of eight years with the first two years as preparatory to be taken in the Mission Institute, the next four as college years to be taken at Carthage College, and the last two in theology to be taken at the Mission Institute. Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, September, 1892.

Thus, almost single-handed, Anderson started the Mission Institute at Keokuk, Iowa, in October, 1873. In addition to his position as president, he was also dean, business manager, and teacher. Apart from one assistant who taught business courses, Anderson assumed responsibility for the general as well as Bible courses, and these tasks were carried on in addition to his pastorate of the Lutheran church and the editorship of the Zions Banér, the monthly periodical. The enrolment during the first year was less than forty students,[1] the income entirely inadequate, and the expenses many.[2] Adding to the financial and moral difficulty, the affiliation with Carthage College was abruptly severed after one month by the trustees of that college.[3] In the meantime, a movement was gradually gaining momentum to gather the churches which had withdrawn from the Mission Synod, various independent groups and congregations, as well as the Swedish Lutheran churches affiliated with the Synod of Northern Illinois, into a new organization, which would support the Mission Institute. This was to be realized in the founding of the Ansgar Synod.

In the month of May, 1874, an invitation was sent out for a conference to be held at Galesburg, Illinois, May 16-19, 1874, to discuss the situation among the churches. The invitation was directed to the Swedish Lutheran churches affiliated with the Synod of Northern Illinois and to all who desired to attend.[4] After some devotional meetings, the conference met on May 18 in a business session. Rev. C. Anderson was elected chairman of the meeting and Solomon Johnson, secretary. The meeting proceeded to examine the position of the Swedish churches within the Synod of Northern Illinois and the General Synod. A list of petitions and requests for preachers was presented and examined.[5] The findings

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[1] Zions Banér, November, 1873.

[2] The indebtedness was approximately $500.00 in April, 1874. See Zions Banér, April, 1874; June, 1874.

[3] Anderson intended to affiliate the college department with Carthage College, an institution under the General Synod. Zions Banér, November, 1873. In accordance with this plan, he desired to have the Mission Synod affiliated as a branch synod under the General Synod. Failing in his effort, it was only natural that he should cast about for some other expedient to further his plan for the school.

[4] Zions Banér, April, and May, 1874.

[5] Ibid., June, 1874. A committee consisting of Prof. J.

led to a prolonged discussion concerning the steps which might effect greater coöperation among the churches represented. The discussions revealed that the conference lacked legal rights to deal with some of the matters presented. Hence, it was decided that a Swedish Evangelical Lutheran district synod be established for the purpose of ordaining and licensing ministers, of supplying preachers to needy fields, and of giving active and organized support to the Mission Institute.[1]

In the ensuing discussion, the question arose whether such a synod should remain independent or should join, as a branch synod, any of the four existing synods.[2] The majority were in favor of the General Synod, for in this they had

> the freedom which simple hearted (enfaldiga) Christians demand and the Word of God confers, namely, that the congregation has the right to open its church to laymen and preachers; the pastor is the servant and not the lord of the church, and the membership shares in the attempt to propagate the gospel among our countrymen and supplies the necessary means.[3]

The following day, May 19, 1874, the meeting voted to call the new synod, The Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Ansgar Synod (Den Svenska Evangeliska Lutherska Ansgarii Synoden).[4] An executive board with Prof. J. Anjou as chairman and C. Anderson as secretary was elected. The constitution, which was identical with that of

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Anjou, C. J. Lindahl, and S. Sundberg, was appointed to present their findings to the meeting. See Protokollsbok for Ansgarii Synoden, p. 7.

[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 8. The reference is to The General Synod, The Council, The Synodical Conference, and a Southern Synod.

[3] Zions Banér, June, 1874. The impossibility of remaining an independent synod was affirmed and attention was called to the fact that out of fifty-four Lutheran synods, forty had begun as independent organizations and by 1874 scarcely eight synods remained autonomous. The experience of the Augustana Synod, which remained independent only ten years before joining the General Council, was also cited.

[4] Ibid. The synod is variously referred to as Ansgarii, Ansgarius or Ansgar Synod. I have adopted the form of Ansgar throughout. The name was adopted in recognition of the first Christian missionary to Sweden whose name was Ansgar. A scurrilous article appeared in Augustana, No. 11, June, 1874, stating that only two churches and two clergymen were present at the organizational meetings. See also Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 11. See Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, September, 1892.

the Mission Synod, was approved the following day.[1] Thus arose a new synod among the Swedish dissenting churches of a Lutheran tradition. At the meeting of the Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois, September 22-28, 1874, several letters of transfer were granted to brethren who had joined the new synod.[2] And at the annual meeting of the General Synod, May 26, 1875, at Baltimore, Maryland, the Ansgar Synod was accepted into its membership.[3]

At the first annual meeting at Keokuk, Iowa, May 20-24, 1875, seven pastors and seven laymen representing their respective churches were present. The number of member congregations formally accepted into the Ansgar synod was eight.[4] The next annual meeting at Knoxville, Illinois, May 26-31, 1876, showed a membership of eight churches and twelve pastors.[5]

Though Ansgar Synod remained the smaller of the two synods,

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[1] Ibid. This constitution is practically identical with the constitution of the Mission Synod adopted the previous year.

[2] Ibid. See also Zions Banér, October, 1874; also Minutes of the Twenty-third Convention of the Evangelical Synod of Northern Illinois, J. Anjou, C. Anderson, J. M. Gustafson, and J. G. Sjöquist were among those who received transfers.

[3] Proceedings of the Twenty-seventh Convention of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. See also Zions Banér, June, 1875.

[4] The following congregations were members of the Ansgar Synod:

Name	Organized
Second Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Galesburg, Illinois.	1868
First Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Keokuk, Iowa	1869
Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church Brantford, Kansas.	1873
Immanuel Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Verona, Missouri	1874
First Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church St. Louis, Missouri.	1874
Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Swedefield, D. T.	1874
Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Little Indian, Illinois.	1875
Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church Jacksonville, Illinois	1875

(See Zions Banér, July, 1875.)

[5] Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll; also Zions Baner, June, 1876.

it was to play a leading role and exert a wholesome influence through the Mission Institute, which it supported, as well as through the Zions Baner, which though subsidized by the General Synod was the medium of expression for the Ansgar Synod.[1] Its affiliation with the General Synod also emphasized the idea of Americanization as over against the relatively isolationist policy of the Mission Synod.

As a result of the founding of the new synod, the immediate needs of the Institute were safeguarded.[2] The teaching staff was strengthened by the addition to the faculty of Prof. John Anjou, a teacher from Minneapolis and newly elected president of the synod. In the meantime Anderson was investigating the possibilities of securing a school building or of moving to a more central locality. As a result of his extensive efforts and good fortune, the Institute was transferred to Knoxville, Illinois.[3] By the fall of 1875,[4] the institution opened at Knoxville under the name of the Swedish-American Lutheran Ansgari College and Ansgari Lutheran Theological Seminary.[5] It was stipulated in the

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[1]This paper, founded by Anderson, became for a time the unofficial organ for the Lutheran non-conformists and the Mission Friends in America.

[2]Through the generosity of certain Lutheran congregations in the East, theological students were provided with free lodging. See Zions Baner, August, 1873.

[3]There were plans to move the school either to Fairfield, Iowa, or Galesburg, Illinois. Anderson tells how it happened to be located at Knoxville. One day he visited that city and told of his plans for a new school to one of his friends. This man introduced him to James Knox, a banker, to whom he presented his plan and made his plea. Thereupon he returned to Galesburg. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Knox sent for him and presented his offer of donating $10,000 on the condition that the school be located at Knoxville and that the citizens of Knoxville raise an additional $5,000. Swedish and American friends immediately subscribed $5,570, whereupon Mr. Knox added $2,950 to his original pledge. Thus, almost $19,000 was assured for the new venture. Zions Baner, July, 1875. See also Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 12.

[4]By the spring of 1875, the Mission Institute completed its last school year in Keokuk. When it closed, it had fifty-one pupils, six of whom were in the department of theology. Zions Baner, May, 1875.

[5]This institution will be referred to throughout as the Ansgar College. Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 12.

agreement with Mr. Knox and the city of Knoxville that the institution should be subject to the jurisdiction of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Ansgar Synod. Should this synod be dissolved or be unable to carry on in accordance with the specified standards, the ownership of the property would revert to the city of Knoxville.[1]

Ansgar College was beset with difficulties from the beginning. The school met a hostile reception from members of the Mission Synod, whose leaders generally did not believe in an educated ministry.[2] Their antipathy undoubtedly was accentuated by the fact that Anderson was a Dane, a man with an American education, and one who had withdrawn from the synod shortly after its organization and had become instrumental in founding another synod. These factors complicated the problems of securing an adequate enrolment and necessary financial security, and resulted in the inability of the school to meet its current expenses. By the spring of 1877, Anderson was given the sole administrative power and the responsibility of raising enough money to meet the deficit and current obligations. Unable to pay the current expenses of the institution, Anderson was forced to borrow money in his own name.[3] Moreover, Anjou, because of failing health, was forced to

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[1]The charter provided for a board of twenty-four individuals who in turn should elect eight trustees, four of whom should be members of the Ansgar Synod. See Bowman, "Ansgarius College," Swedish American Historical Bulletin, August, 1929, pp. 19-20; also, J. Princell, J. G. Princells Levnadsminnen (Chicago, 1916), pp. 112-13. An excellent study of the Ansgar College is found in Leland H. Carlson, A History of North Park College, pp. 11-21.

[2]Since "preachers were called, not made," secular preparation was not considered very important. Spiritual preparation would be supplied apart from any secular education. At this early period, the leaders apparently were satisfied if the ministerial candidates and the colporteurs adhered to the doctrine as prescribed by the Symbolic creeds and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Still they did not remain consistently true to this conviction, for when C. M. Youngquist was to be ordained by the Mission Synod in 1873, he was first sent to St. Paul to study under Professor J. Anjou. Moreover, at the annual meeting of the synod in 1874, it was decided to write Dr. P. P. Waldenstrom, in Sweden, to recommend someone as teacher for ministerial candidates. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 84. Cf. Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 11-12.

[3]This is one of the most tragic chapters in the educational history of the Mission Friends. The Board of Trustees actually

withdraw. In his place, a call was issued to Karl Erixon of Stockholm, Sweden, who arrived in the fall of 1878.[1] Disappointed at the low interest of the public in the school, refused further credit because of his former indebtedness on behalf of the institution, and reduced to utmost poverty, Anderson resigned the presidency[2] and Erixon was called as his successor both as president and editor; he also became president of the synod.[3]

At the annual meeting in June, 1878, the school board transferred the full management of the school to the synod.[4] The members of this board also expressed the desirability of coöperation in the work and the responsibility of the institution between the Ansgar and Mission Synods.[5] Cognizant of this growing sentiment, the meeting elected the executive board of the synod as a committee to supervise the interests of the school and to initiate steps that might lead to a closer coöperation and eventual merger of the two synods. The committee was authorized to call a united synodical meeting in the event that the Mission Synod was in agree-

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requested Anderson to administer the school at his own risk for one year, with the proviso that he return it to them free of debt at the end of that year. The Synod urged him to accept the challenge, but without the financial obligation. Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 41. See also C. V. Bowman, "Ansgarius College," Swedish Historical Bulletin, August, 1929, pp. 19-30; Princells Levnadsminnen, p. 113; Carlson, A History of North Park College, pp. 12-14.

[1] Princells Levnadsminnen, p. 113; Zions Banér, February 15, 1877; Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, pp. 52, 64, 66, 97, 102. Erixon had been a successful editor of Nya Posten. He was originally called as instructor in Swedish and as editor of Zions Banér. For the former position he was to receive $600 in salary; in addition he was to receive as editor $200 from C. Anderson and Geo. Larke, owners of Zions Banér.

[2] Persona non grata to the Mission Friends, whose work he had been so largely instrumental in founding, Anderson left not only the school, but also the church and the synod and accepted a secular position until he had met all the indebtedness incurred through the school. Then he accepted the pastorate of the Immanuel Lutheran Church of Rockford, Illinois. Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, pp. 64, 102. Cf. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 109-10.

[3] Ibid., pp. 110-12. Cf. Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, pp. 52-54.

[4] Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, pp. 62-63.

[5] Ibid.

ment, and to add to the membership of the committee from outside of the Ansgar Synod should such a step appear desirable.[1]

President Erixon gave himself unreservedly to his manifold duties. Aware of the ever increasing desire by the members of the Ansgar Synod for a union of the two synods, Erixon labored passionately for its realization. Under his guidance a letter of invitation was addressed to the Central Board of the Mission Synod requesting a union meeting at Altona, Illinois, September 25, 1878.[2] Should this preliminary meeting prove successful, the executive board planned to call a special meeting of both synods. While a spirit of uncertainty prevailed regarding the response, the invitation was sent out in the hope "that much good would come from it."[3] In an editorial, Erixon minimized the differences between the synods:

> The difference between these two synods is really nothing else than what caused the separation--for up to this time they had been together in a union--namely the fact that the Ansgar Synod is affiliated with the American General Synod; this the Mission Synod is not.[4]

This well meaning attempt to advance the union cause was challenged by Professor Anjou, who demanded that Erixon give additional information as to an already existing union. The Ansgar Synod, he said, is like any district synod within the General Synod, and the Mission Synod has been formed out of many societies which the Christians themselves have founded without any other pattern than that received from Sweden.[5] Erixon's explanation at a later date proved entirely unsatisfactory to most readers.[6] Nevertheless, he continued to emphasize the need, usefulness, and blessing of a union based on the Word of God. By Scriptural and practical arguments, he sought to confute the view held by many that the time for merger was still unripe and that the spirit of partisanship, prejudice, and selfishness would thwart any such attempts. He

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[1] Ibid., pp. 64-65.

[2] Ibid.; see also Zions Banér, June 15, 1878.

[3] Chicago-Bladet, September 13, 1878. It was expected that C. A. Björk and E. August Skogsbergh would attend.

[4] Zions Banér, July 5, 1878.

[5] Chicago-Bladet, July 19, 1878. [6] Ibid., November 29, 1878.

also called attention to the usefulness of mission meetings as a medium for rapprochement, since they provide an opportunity for pastors and members of the two synods to become acquainted.[1]

The proposed meeting at Alton, Illinois, did not materialize. By September 2, the Board of the Ansgar Synod was in receipt of a communication from the Board of the Mission Synod in which Sanngren, the President, stated that because of the short notice the Mission Synod would not be able to meet with the Ansgar Synod as suggested. He also noted that any eventual merger would always be "fraught with great misgivings."[2] Thereupon the central board of the Ansgar Synod sent a written proposal for merger to the central board of the Mission Synod.

The central board of the Mission Synod received the proposal from the Ansgar Synod at its meeting at Moingona, Iowa, December 3-6, 1878. Sanngren and Hedenschough, past president and secretary of the synod, had died, and the warm friend of ecumenicity, E. August Skogsbergh, vice secretary, was absent. Vice president Björk assumed the presidency.[3] The other members present were clearly unsympathetic to the idea of union or even of rapprochement.[4] Thus, the meeting from the outset lacked the strong personalities that would have been in favor of a union. One unnamed speaker took a somewhat broad point of view and expressed his satisfaction over the proposal.[5] One demanded genuine inten-

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[1] Ibid., November 29, 1878.

[2] Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, September 2, 1878.

[3] Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 109-10.

[4] Rev. A. Hallner, though not a member of the board, was elected secretary. Other members of the board present were pastors John Peterson, P. Wedin, and Mr. P. Englund. Ibid.

[5] "It is encouraging to hear how God's people feel such a fervent need of each other, and how they nourish in their hearts an unquenchable desire for an internal and external union and merger. This is appropriate of all who are born of God, but still live on earth. Our brethren within the Ansgar Synod, by their proposal and request of union, clearly make us understand that they know us as true Christians, and that they have an undivided confidence in us. Because of this, they feel themselves in their synod somewhat on the side lines or as a member separated from the body. This is not only expressed in the present proposal, but the same has clearly appeared in recent days both in speech and in writings." Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 109-10.

tion of repentance and proof of sincerity by the men of the Ansgar Synod,[1] while still another, in his zeal to retain the status quo, questioned the sincerity of the proposal.[2] One of the delegates waxed cynical with regard to the possibility of merger,[3] while others questioned if any closer affiliation could be effected than that which already existed.[4] The proposal was consequently turned

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[1]"This question has surprised me ever since I heard of it the first time, especially since we have been no mystery to them at any time! And least of all were we this at the time a few years ago when they were among us and the question of affiliation was raised. We were then fully known to them, both through our teaching and the conduct of our mission work. Despite this they left us, turned their backs on us and organized churches and synods in spite of the Mission Synod. The Mission Synod, as far as I know, has not changed faith or conduct since; therefore I wonder what can have motivated their desire for union. Perhaps they have seen their mistake in this respect, as well as the manner in which they have carried on their work, founded churches, established a school, sent out preachers, etc. In my own judgment and in the judgment of many brethren whom I know, all this has appeared to deviate from God's revealed Word and pure Christian brotherly love. Therefore a union seems impossible until I have seen satisfactory proofs of a genuine intention of repentance, and that their wish in reality is sincere. . . . ." Ibid., pp. 112-13.

[2]"My opinion in this question is this: How could these synods be united now when they could not be in 1873 when the Mission Synod was founded? And this question has been debated for a year and a half. I feel the question to be worn out and ought not to occupy our time anymore. . . . ." Ibid., pp. 113-14.

[3]"Some brethren apparently question if the desire by the brethren from the Ansgar Synod has originated from a pure motivation. Should such a suspicion have legitimate reasons, this will soon be revealed. For if they consider it more valuable to belong to us than that which separates us, then the obstacles are easily removed. . . . ." Ibid.

[4]"As a synod, no closer union can be effected than what is already taking place when our mission houses (churches) are open to them and theirs to us; when they confess and recognize us as brethren, and we recognize as many of them as are known for a true Christian life as brethren. . . .then no closer union can be effected than by making one of the two synods. For coöperation no closer organic union is necessary. . . . .Only two ways exist in making the two synods one. Either one synod must be dissolved in order to join with the other, or else they must both be dissolved for the founding of a new. But this latter attempt will result in making three or more. Our friends have become tired of novel things; when they now have established something in accordance with the Word of God, they do not desire to let go of it and again be thrown into confusion, for our synod is established on the Word of God and has the protection of the law. When we

down, but on the basis that the Central Board did not consider itself authorized to take any definite steps before they had received authorization from the Mission Synod.[1] Instead the Board proceeded to adopt a resolution aimed, at least in part, at the Ansgar Synod. It read:

> Complaints having come to us that all kinds of agents intrude on the Mission churches with subscription lists, newspapers, and periodicals, we consider it a duty to warn our friends not to give their support to those who are not sent out or recommended by the Mission Synod. For the protection of our friends, all subscription lists from the Mission Synod will bear the seal of the Mission Synod, and its representatives will be furnished with letters of recommendation.[2]

The action at Moingona, rejecting the proposal and aiming its shafts of criticism against the Ansgar Synod caused an indignant protest from great numbers among the members of both synods. In vain Björk sought to explain and defend the action of the Board in the Missions-Vännen.[3] The controversy kept the issue alive; thus we find the question of the merger brought up at a mission meeting at Salemsburg, Kansas, February 3, 1879. There they discussed at length the topic: "Is it desirable that the Mission and Ansgar Synods become united, and if so, what must be done from the point of view of the Mission Synod that this aim can be attained in a Christ-like and loving spirit?"[4] The Ansgar Synod was commended because it had taken the initiative in the attempt at a union; also it had instituted a series of reforms in its churches by admitting believers only to the Holy Communion, and had exercised greater care in selecting entering students for the school at Knoxville. The Mission Synod was mildly censured for its cold

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now have a building established on the right foundation, why need we then have to tear it down and build another on the same foundation. Moreover, we have never heard under what provision such a merger should take place." Ibid., pp. 114-16. For this meeting, compare Missions-Vännen, January, 1879.

[1] Missions-Vännen, January, 1879. Also Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 117-19.

[2] Ibid. See also Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, May, 1893.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, pp. 59, 98.

reception of the initial proposal of union and was urged to give a public exhortation to its pastors to visit churches of the Ansgar Synod as much as possible as well as to invite the pastors of the Ansgar Synod to visit in the churches of the Mission Synod in order to get better acquainted. After these words of commendation and advice, it was recommended that the pastors and one or two of the board members make themselves familiar with the actual condition of Ansgar College and find out "if the brethren in the Ansgar Synod have been successful in their attempts at reform," and "if these have been carried through with power and emphasis and not stopped at good intentions only."[1]

To this report, the editor of Zions Banér appended the timely comment:

> Is it not equally important that we ascertain if the mission congregations within the Mission Synod have been really reformed with 'power' and 'emphasis' in accordance with the Word of God? Yes, is not such a continuous reform necessary everywhere if one does not desire the spiritual life to become stereotyped?[2]

At the annual meeting at Chicago, May 28-29, 1879, the Mission Synod was well represented;[3] moreover, some of the leaders of the Ansgar Synod were also present.[4] At this meeting, the resolution enacted at Moingona, Iowa, was repudiated.[5] The men from the Ansgar Synod were requested to present their viewpoint. Upon their suggestion the meeting appointed a joint committee of three from each synod to draft tentative plans as a basis for merger. This committee presented the following plan:

> We propose an inner and outer union and coöperation, based on the Word of God, between God's children in the Mission Synod and the Ansgar Synod.
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> We believe that a union can be brought about most conveniently by dissolving both synods and by drawing up and adopting a new constitution for a united organization, on the foundation mentioned above.

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[1] Zions Banér, March 28, 1879. [2] Ibid.

[3] Eleven of the nineteen ministers of the Mission Synod were present and twenty-two churches were represented by twenty-nine delegates. Missions-Synodens Protokoll, p. 136.

[4] Among them were K. Erixon, George Wiberg, and J. W. Strömberg. Ibid.

[5] Missions-Synodens Protokoll; also Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 114.

We recommend that for such purpose a committee of five members be appointed from each synod, of whom at least two shall be laymen, and that this committee be instructed to work out a new constitution that may be adopted.

We believe that the proposed constitution for the Mission Covenant (in Sweden), prepared by the ministers' committee and the Covenant Board, can be taken into consideration when preparing the constitution.

We further believe that in the new Covenant only such churches and societies shall be admitted as are organized according to the Word of God, and only such ministers as, by word and deed, indicate that they live in communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. But besides this the Covenant ought to labor among the Swedish people in this country.

Furthermore we recommend that the Mission Synod and the Ansgar Synod, without regard to the outcome of these efforts to bring about a union, appoint one or two ministers to visit as many churches as possible within the two synods.

The committee shall have its proposed plan for union and the constitution ready before Christmas of this year. After that the plan and the constitution shall be published in order that it may be known among the brethern and then presented at the next annual conference of the synods.[1]

In the prolonged debate that followed, many of the Mission Synod representatives expressed themselves against a union on the ground that some of the churches of the Ansgar Synod were not modeled after the New Testament pattern but admitted both Christians and non-Christians into their membership. The Ansgar Synod representatives rejoined that the proposed union included only the children of God in both synods and that they were prepared to dissolve their organization to prepare the way for the merger. In view of this pronouncement, some within the Mission Synod expressed an uncertainty as to how much would be left to unite after the dissolution had taken place. The debate, not always conducted on a dignified level, finally ended in a decision to postpone definite action. Thereupon, a communication clarifying the attitude of the Mission Synod was addressed to the Ansgar Synod. It reads as follows:

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[1]This document was signed by E. August Skogsbergh, C. M. Youngquist, S. Wm. Youngquist, representing the Mission Synod, and K. Erixon, George Wiberg, and J. W. Strömberg, representing the Ansgar Synod. Zions Baner, June 13, 1879. Missions-Synodens Protokoll, I, 136-38, 140.

> Considering your letter, addressed to the Central Board of the Mission Synod and referred to the annual conference of the Mission Synod, it was brought out that it is the hearty desire of the Mission Synod to be united with all the children of God, on the basis of God's word, and that all that hinders an inner and outward union between the Mission Synod and the Ansgar Synod shall be cleared away. But as it is exclusively the work of the Lord to unite and as all real union must spring from the heart, the only Christian union, both inward and outward, will be brought about when the hearts are drawn together in love, which is the bond of peace. Therefore, where real union shall exist, an inward communion and acquaintance must first unite the hearts, and then all partitions between God's children will crumble.
>
> Because this essential for all true union has not yet been brought about, the Mission Synod desires to further take the question of a union under consideration in prayer to God and in the meantime commune with each other in brotherly love.
>
> For these reasons the question was tabled by the Conference until the matter has been so prepared that the people in the Mission Synod request such a union.[1]

The Ansgar Synod received the letter at its annual meeting in 1879, but took no further action. Thus the attempt at merger had failed, largely because of the ultra conservative stand of the Mission Synod. The rapprochement, however, had been very useful in bringing the entire problem to the attention of the constituencies in both synods. Having failed in the synodical affiliation, Erixon, the president of the Ansgar Synod, was more successful in his attempt to merge the publication, Zions Banér, with Chicago-Bladet,[2] another religious and political weekly, which was to be the organ of independent groups and individuals. This merger was completed in 1879.[3]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 140-41, 150-51. Also Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 117-18.

[2] The Chicago-Bladet was launched in 1877 by John Martinson, a newsman and printer. In accouncing the paper, he stated that it was published not because there was a dearth of religious and political periodicals, but because the existing ones, contrary to their often repeated claims, did not bring the truth to their readers. This Martinson wanted to remedy. The Chicago-Bladet was to be an organ of independent thought, standing by the Word of God and not by any denomination. Thus, in the course of time, it was to carry on a polemic against both of its competitors, and especially against the Augustana och Missionären. Chicago-Bladet. Kristlig och politisk tidning for svenskarne i Amerika, Chicago, Illinois, February 16, 1877.

[3] The merged periodicals were published under the name of

In the meantime, the condition at Ansgar College was discouraging. The enrolment had decreased to less than twenty-five and the business school had no students. The financial situation was also desperate. In view of prevailing threats to close the school, a group of men from Galesburg and Altona, Illinois, on January 2, 1880, made an agreement with the trustees of the board to assume the school's indebtedness and to manage its affairs for a trial period of three years. Then, on February 2, these friends of the school organized a school society of thirty-six members called, The Swedish Evangelical School Association.[1] They also issued a second invitation to Rev. J. G. Princell to assume the presidency.[2] Princell accepted the call on condition that the Ansgar College become a non-denominational school and a biblical institute.[3] In May of the same year, the school board in Knoxville and the annual meeting of the Ansgar Synod in Moline, Illinois, accepted the resignation of President Erixon[4] and the conditions laid down by Princell.[5] With his coming, new confidence was

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Chicago-Bladet. John Hagström reveals that Erixon sold the address list of the Zions Banér for $300. John Hagström,"I begynnelsen," I Forna Dar. En premiebok för Förbundets Veckotidning." Edited by G. F. Hedstrand (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1926), p. 12.

[1]This school association was also called Ansgari Skolförening i Nordamerikas Förenta Stater. It assumed the existing school debt of $800. See Ansgar College Protokollbok, p. 5. This book contains all the official minutes of the school board. See also Chicago-Bladet, March 19, 1880.

[2]For the biographical note of Princell, see supra, pp. 111-13 . Princell had been extended a call to the presidency upon the resignation of C. Anderson, Ansgar College Protokollbok, pp. 6-7. Also Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 103.

[3]After his bitter experiences with the Augustana Synod, Princell in principle was opposed to all synods and denominations; hence he declined the first call. Ansgar College Protokollbok, pp. 8-10.

[4]Erixon had done a magnificent work, carrying the positions of president of the synod and of the school, the editorship of the Zions Banér, and all this in addition to a full teaching schedule. No longer able to carry this load, he resigned and accepted the pastorate of the Mission Church at Lindsborg, Kansas. Later he was called to Moline, Illinois, and finally to New York City, New York. He will be best remembered, however, for his efforts at merging the two synods. Supra, pp.135-37;140-43. Also Ansgar College Protokoll, pp. 9-10.

[5]The institution assumed the name Ansgar College and the

generated in the school and the enrolment in the theological department increased markedly.[1]

Despite the improvement which followed the reorganization under the new presidency, the financial needs of the school remained acute.[2] To solve this problem, John Hagström, a student and part time instructor in the college, was commissioned to serve as a traveling representative for the solicitation of funds. In spite of much indifference among the Ansgar Synod constituency and active opposition from the Mission Synod members, Hagström is said to have been fairly successful.[3] The indifference and antagonism can be traced in part to the active propaganda from pulpit and religious press against denominations, a man-made ministry, and even against the establishment of congregations with formal membership records. The Chicago-Bladet, especially, carried on an active and successful tirade against the establishment of congregations with formal membership and a permanent ministry. Martinson, the gifted but not always charitable editor, wrote against such things as foreign to New Testament teaching.[4] In a series of effective articles, Princell somewhat later sought to prove that all denominations, sects and communions, are equally foreign to the Bible, which knows only one communion, the "communion of saints."[5] His ideas were not without effect. In 1882, the Ansgar Synod had severed its relationship with the General Synod. Three congregations had withdrawn from the Mission Synod.[6] Princell himself

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Mission Institute in Knoxville, Illinois. Chicago-Bladet, July 23, 1880.

[1]Ansgar College Protokollbok, pp. 28-29. See also Carlson, op. cit., p. 17.

[2]The magnanimous spirit of C. Anderson is reflected in the fact that as late as in 1879, he together with C. G. Peterson assumed the responsibility to raise $750 for the salary of Princell among his American acquaintances.

[3]John Hagström, " Begynnelsen," I Forna Dar, ed. by G. F. Hedstrand (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern), pp. 17-18. See also Ansgar College Protokollbok, pp. 43, 46, 54, 58.

[4]Chicago-Bladet, July 24 and 31, 1883. See also Hagström "I Begynnelsen," I Forna Dar, pp. 16-21.

[5]Chicago-Bladet, December 9, 16, 23, 1884.

[6]The Swedish Tabernacle in Minneapolis, The Swedish Taber-

had held a ministerial license from the Ansgar Synod, but learning that he could perform the ministerial office as an ordained minister and president of a theological seminary, he returned the license and became independent of all synodical jurisdiction.[1]

In the meantime, Ansgar College had been under the supervision of the school association and in a measure independent of the synod in its internal affairs. On June 13, 1881, the association, in a guarded statement, asked if the synod would be willing to relinquish its rights and responsibilities regarding the school and instruct "The Board of Incorporators and Trustees of Ansgar College" to do likewise. In case of an affirmative answer, the school association would attempt to secure a charter of incorporation" and take other measures which possibly would be for the good of the school and its work."[2] According to Hagström, Princell intended to dissolve the synod in order that he might get control of the school property and make the institution completely independent of synodical jurisdiction.[3] This agitation for independence, reached a climax in the calling of a meeting of the synod at Galesburg, April 4-10, 1884.[4] In an incisive and lengthy talk, Princell charged his assistant Hagström with unethical and irregular procedure in calling the meeting; Hagström was also accused of undermining the president, of inviting Rev. Karl Palmberg of Sweden to assume the presidency, of secretly negotiating with the Congregationalists for financial aid in exchange for other important concessions, and finally of propagandizing for the return of the school under the immediate supervision of the synod, thus abolishing the school association.[5] The attempt to remove the school from the supervision of the school association and the president and place it under synodical control was vehemently opposed by Princell who declared: "I will never remain there and

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nacle in Chicago, and the Swedish Mission Church in Princeton, Illinois, were the three churches that withdrew from the Mission Synod.

[1] Princell, Levnadsminnen, p. 109.

[2] Ansgar College Protokollbok, p. 19.

[3] Ibid., pp. 64-65, 73; also Hagström, ibid., p. 21.

[4] Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 60.

[5] According to Hagström's own words, the treasurer of the

turn out synodical servants (synodalspinnar) for them."[1] The school association, however, formally served notice that it could no longer carry the responsibility for the school. As a result it was returned to the custody of the synod.[2] A committee previously appointed to re-examine the possibilities of merger in the light of constitutional hindrances that might inhere in such a move reported that the synod would have to be dissolved before it could merge. Confronted with this crisis, a committee with Princell and Larson as members were instructed to draft a new proposal that would resolve the difficulty. This document, patterned largely on the constitution of the Mission Covenant in Sweden and

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synod had asked him to call a meeting of the synod to consider the desperate financial situation of the school. Instead of consulting with President Princell and E. G. Hjerpe, chairman of the school board, Hagström wrote the chairman of the synod, requesting the meeting. Princell also charged Hagström with using for selfish propaganda purposes a small news sheet, Det flygande brevet, published by Hagström in the interest of the school. Hagström repeatedly denied the accusations. Sitting as the secretary of the meeting, he wrote a paragraph regarding this incident which begins with the sentence: "An unchristian behavior of the president of the school against one of his assistant teachers cast a gloom. . . . ." The paragraph is crossed over and the notation made in the margin "Ej justerat," (not adjusted) but generally read to mean "not accepted." For this controversy see, Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 64. Cf. Princells Levnadsminnen, pp. 122-24 and Hagström, "I Begynnelsen," I Forna Dar, pp. 22-24. The fact is that as early as September 28, 1883, the synod had decided to call Palmberg as a teacher. Princell who was charged with the responsibility of inviting him informed the next meeting, January 2, 1884, that he had had no response from Palmberg but that rumors had it that he did not want to make the long trip across the ocean. Ansgari-Synodens Protokoll, p. 60. The record, thus, tends to clear Hagström of the Palmberg charge. See also Axel Mellander in a letter to David Nyvall, Covenant Archives. Among other things Mellander gives a brief resume of the strife between Princell and Hagström and exonerates Hagström from any responsibility in the unpleasant relationship between the two men.

[1]Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 122-24. Also, Hagström, op. cit., pp. 22-23. Martinson wrote that we never need fear a scarcity of preachers in the Church of God as we are all members of the royal priesthood and the high priest is continually with us.

[2]According to Hagström, Princell intended to dissolve the synod in order that he might get control of the school plant and make the school completely independent of synodical jurisdiction. Hagström, op. cit., p. 21. Ansgari-Synodens Protokol, pp. 64, 65, 73.

partly on an already proposed modification of the Ansgar Synod constitution, was later presented and discussed in the meeting.[1] It gave no other confessional requirement than the Word of God. Its most important article provided for three classes of members: (1) All Christian ministers who were interested in the work of the society, (2) All Christian individuals who were known to be sincere in their Christian life, (3) One or two delegates from every Christian church desiring to be represented at the meetings of the society. This article immediately met a determined opposition, many preferring an organization of churches only.[2] However, no action was taken at this time.

There is evidence that the school association in the meantime attempted to gain control of the school property. Thus in a meeting on August 29, 1884, the association made the following significant decision:

> That the school board direct an inquiry to the City of Knoxville asking if the City of Knoxville in the interest of the educational work carried on would transfer the school property to the school association in its present form or in the form of a corporation.
>
> That in case the party concerned would be reluctant to grant this request, the school board expresses its hope that should J. G. Princell request these rights as a personal privilege, they may be granted him.[3]

The matter was brought before a special meeting in Worcester, in August, 1884, for final disposal. It was made convincingly clear that the school, according to the incorporation papers, could not exist apart from the synod and the synodical constitution could not be amended except by dissolving the synod. It was also revealed that the school could no longer continue because of lack of funds. After a lengthy and at times acrimonious debate, it was voted to dissolve the synod, thus paving the way for a new organization,[4] and, in accordance with the charter, transfer the school

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[1] This document, with the exception of the article concerning membership, was in due time to constitute, in the main, the constitution of the Mission Covenant of America. See Princell, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

[2] Ibid., p. 158. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 136.

[3] Ansgar College Protokollbok, August 29, 1884, p. 73.

[4] The dissolution was really conditional to the organization of a new association of both synods. On June 2, 1885, the Ansgar Synod was formally dissolved at a meeting held at Moline, Illinois.

property to the city of Knoxville.[1] Princell seeing the futility of continuing as head of the school, had already resigned and accepted a position as associate editor of the Chicago-Bladet, in addition to the pastorate of an independent group of Christians, later known as the "Oak Street Congregation" (Oak Street församlingen). He was also to spend much of his time traveling among the independent groups and to speak at their mission meetings.[2]

Though the loss of the school property was regrettable, its educational efforts had not been in vain. More than two hundred students had received Christian education during its eleven years of existence. Among the ministers who received their training at the school were A. L. Anderson, A. G. Nelson,[3] C. A. Berggren, C. J. Erixon, G. Holmquist, F. M. Johnson, and C. Peterson, all of whom studied under C. Anderson, John Anjou, and Karl Erixon. During Princell's presidency of four years, over one hundred had attended the school. Of this number, thirty were preparing for the ministry. Many of the Ansgar College students were to make significant contributions to Christian work. Among them were such preachers as A. W. Franklin, Svante Lundeen, J. W. Carlson, G. Gustafson, John Hagström, C. B. Johnson, and Nels J. Nelson. Among those who were to occupy places of denominational responsibility were Otto Högfeldt, editor of the Missions-Vännen, Axel Mellander, professor at North Park College, and E. G. Hjerpe, second president

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[1]This is one of the most tragic incidents in connection with the early educational ventures of the Mission Friends. Due to lack of vision and failure to coöperate, the transfer of the school to Knoxville constituted not only the material loss of $25,000 worth of property, but also an educational and spiritual loss. The citizens of the town who had donated furniture and equipment reclaimed it; some was claimed for the city, and the remainder was sold at auction to satisfy the creditors. See Chicago-Bladet September, 1884.

[2]The decision of Worcester was a bitter disappointment to Princell who had hoped that the school could continue altogether free of synodical supervision and support. See Princell, op. cit., pp. 126-27.

[3]There is an interesting account of the Ansgar Synod and the Mission Institute in an unpublished letter by Rev. A. G. Nelson, one of the most original pioneer preachers in the Covenant, to Rev. Theodore W. Anderson, dated February 28, 1834. Some of the historical data, however, are not quite accurate. The letter is in the Covenant Archives.

of the Swedish Mission Covenant.

During the period under review, three types of Mission Friends emerged: the type represented by the Mission and Ansgar Synods, the second represented by the independents, and the third represented by an element who had become known as the "free" mission people. The independents were composed of churches which had withdrawn from the synods or that had never united with them. Typical examples of those which had withdrawn in a spirit of independence and autonomy were the Swedish Mission Tabernacle in Minneapolis, the Swedish Mission Tabernacle in Chicago, and the Swedish Mission Church in Princeton, Illinois. The independents were also represented by the Mission Friends in the eastern states, who generally followed the leadership of Princell and held aloof from all synodical connections. A spirit of freedom also swept the Ansgar Synod, especially after Princell had assumed the presidency. This is demonstrated in the severance of affiliation with the General Synod. And in the Mission Synod attempts were made to modify the narrow constitutional provisions.

The "free" mission movement, which was characterized by a spirit of independence and freedom both with regard to doctrine and order within the local churches, was greatly influenced by the Chicago-Bladet. Its editorial message was a clarion call to return to the purity and simplicity of the primitive church. Repeatedly the editor reaffirmed his policy of faith in Christ rather than in synodical connection. Advocating the priesthood of the believers, he called all other ministries nothing but ministries of the world and asserted the right of churches to ordain ministers and missionaries for Christian service and to commission them to fields of labor at home and abroad. The evangel of freedom, the wickedness of a permanent and salaried ministry, the anti-scriptural tenets of church constitutions and church records were pointed out with great effectiveness. Generally it carried on a polemic against its competitors, and especially against the Augustana publications. Its non-confessional stand was viewed with alarm and challenged by President Hasselquist, who called the new publication "nihilistic," laboring for the dissolving of all conferences and synods, and seeking to destroy all order in

the church and the church itself together with the ministry.[1] Princell and Skogsbergh also came in for violent criticism. Said Hasselquist:

> Do the members of the Mission Synod, for example, know that Princell and Skogsbergh consciously and powerfully work for the dissolution of all denominational order and church relationships? They are spiritual communists like the rabble rousers and pious partisans of Luther's day.[2]

Nearly all the early Augustana Protokoll contain warnings and thinly veiled hints against sects and partisans spirits. Thus in the report for the fifteenth annual meeting, the president warns against the so-called Mission Synod as well as a group that belongs to the Synod of Northern Illinois as proselyters in the Lutheran field. During these years there were also warnings against the spreading of the Waldenström heresy.[3] In the 16th report, Norelius castigates Waldenström and his teaching saying that his teaching is as far removed from the Lutheran teaching as"night is from day."[4]

Olof Olsson, first pastor of the Lindsborg congregation, and later professor at Augustana College and Seminary, also spoke out with great conviction against all the dissenting movements. As early as 1873 he wrote a refutation of the Waldenströmian doctrine of the atonement. According to Stephenson, Olsson's antipathy to the dissenting movement was accentuated when he became a professor in the Augustana Theological Seminary in 1876, "in which atmosphere of excessive orthodoxy he was betrayed into writing an attack on the new-fangled doctrine of the atonement and on the

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[1]Hasselquist called attention to Martinson's violation of Scripture, in using a statement in Hosea 8: 14, "For Israel hath forgotten its Maker and buildeth temples," as evidence of apostasy. When men forget God, they build beautiful churches of worship, said Martinson. Hence, he and his little group of like-minded followers met in a hall. See Chicago-Bladet, September 6, 1881. Also, Augustana och Missionären, August 24, 1881.

[2]Augustana och Missionären, September 1, 1881.

[3]The Augustana Synod leaders also took exception to M. W. Montgomery's book, A Wind from the Holy Spirit in Sweden and Norway (New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1885), as misleading and inaccurate in its factual information. See Augustana Synodens Protokoll, 26th annual meeting. Cf. Infra, pp. 167-68.

[4]Ibid., 1874.

'free church' element among the Swedes."[1] In a treatise of 1878 he attempted to "identify the Waldenströmian doctrine with the Socinian 'heresy'" and in 1881 he joined Hasselquist in an attack upon the errors and excesses of all dissenters. Said he:

> Whence comes the credulity by which a great many Christians embrace old soul-destroying errors when these appear in made-over attire? If these credulous Christians knew, as they might know from church history, what boundless desolation these same errors have caused in times past, they would not hail with delight every new wind of doctrine that blows. He who has seen the destructive effect of the storm that follows is astounded to see the signs foreboding the next one and takes all possible precautions to protect himself from the peril. Next to the Word of God, there is no more effective means than the history of the church by which to identify the prince of darkness when disguised as an angel of light.[2]

The "free" mission people would quite generally look upon the exhorter that could boast of no education as better qualified to arouse sinners and minister to the saints than the average minister. Zeal was more important than knowledge. And the congregations were not always in a mood to be pastorally advised for all were ministers. Women preachers, looked at askance by the first two types of Mission Friends, were accepted and encouraged by the "free." A freedom on the border of confusion was often brought

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[1] Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . . , p. 286.

[2] Olson, Olof Olsson, p. 155. In 1888 Olsson himself was accused of heresy at the Galesburg meeting of the Augustana Synod. Olsson is said to have made a brief defense and then submitted his resignation which was accepted. After this experience he wrote to one of his intimate friends: "I must confess that every issue of Augustana contradicts the glad hopes you inspire. Oh, If you could only know how terrible that paper now appears to me. But I ought not to speak so, for I myself, as you know, became a mighty and intrepid fighter when, after much hesitation, I joined the Augustana Synod. Thus I have helped to shape a church body in which I now find myself homeless, a church whose honored leaders are afire with unquenchable fanaticism. . . . .When I read of what my brother heretics in former days had to put up with, I am ashamed to live in the peace and comfort that is really mine. Some time in the future doubtless there will be born, even among the Swedes, a church communion in which a true Christian may live in peace even if he is unable to subscribe to Weidner's Dogmatics. I cherish the silent hope that the Mission Synod may at least pave the way for such a body. . . . .But for two parties that have sprung from the same revival in Sweden to be forever quarreling and blackening one another, that grieves me sorely. And because I contributed much toward this scandalous animosity among Christians, I sought to put in a conciliatory word." This is Olsson of 1889 as revealed in his letters. See Olson, op. cit., pp. 212, 220-21, 225.

to the meeting place. Martinson's misinterpretation of the priesthood of the believer doctrine had borne fruit; extravagances ensued and something irremediable happened to evangelism. Mrs. Princell gives the following observation:

> They held general mission meetings at various places. . . .and while rather peculiar things were in evidence, yet the meetings were good. . . . .At most of the larger meetings later on, one or several prophetic topics would be discussed. Meanwhile many were converted, and many Christians were awakened to a warmer and more intimate spiritual life and to expect Jesus' coming from heaven.
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> But not always or everywhere was a Christian mental balance maintained in all these things, beautiful, pure, and true as they were. The times were no doubt fraught with excesses. At the meetings people became very much excited, overjoyed, and happy, the preachers not the least. Well and good, but when it turned to mental intoxication, so that the people shouted loudly and fell to the floor overcome by their feelings, then this brought them much approbrium from the unsaved, who openly mocked at those who were lying by the platform, rolling from side to side, shouting, laughing, or weeping in turn. There were preachers who now began to propound the doctrine that nothing was genuine and spiritual that did not come with noise and storm.
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> Much was taught that was good and right. . . .yet they sometimes went to extremes, deeming it sinful to have curtains at the windows, carpets on the floor, paper on the wall, etc. . . . . .In the earliest days of the Free Mission,people went farther in their zeal than was proper, making it a sin to wear a wedding ring, forbidding the carrying of a watch chain, and condemning as vanity such articles as collars and neckties. To deposit money in a bank was to do wrong. Thus many sensitive consciences were bound. Of course these things were nothing new; the same thing had happened before, as instanced by the Montanists who appeared at the close of the second century. . . . .[1]

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[1]Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 175-76; translation by Olson, Olof Olsson, pp. 152-53. For argumentative purposes Olson quotes Princell's Levnadsminnen at length. He commits the fallacy, however, of applying the above quotations to all believers that withdrew from the Swedish Lutheran churches. Says he: "Its adherents called themselves variously Free Friends, Mission Friends, the Free Mission, and they eventually formed four distinct groups with no very distinct gradation in their professed freedom from ecclesiastical trammels. Thus there is, in addition to the Mission Covenant, the Swedish Congregationalist, and the Evangelical Free Church, even a group designated as the 'Free-free' Mission Friends. It was against the whole movement, call it what you will, that the leading men of the Augustana Synod put up a conservative opposition. . . . .For a fair statement of what this struggle for 'freedom' in Christian faith and life implied and how it degenerated into license and often sank to the lowest forms of fanaticism and religious excesses before the wiser heads called a halt, we turn to one who himself was a leader. . . . ." When applied correctly,

Two leaders that were to give direction to the "Free Church" movement, in addition to Martinson and Princell were August Davis and Fredrik Franson. Davis had been a student at Ansgar College and had spent some time in Pennsylvania where he embraced Free Methodist views. These he passionately sought to disseminate upon his return west. Especially did he emphasize the need for the Christian to be filled and baptized with the Holy Spirit.[1] With others he also stressed not only "baptism with the spirit" but also the "holiness" doctrine and the imminent return of Jesus. Much of this preaching led to confusion and excesses--a kind of religious ecstasy--which transformed many a meeting into a bedlam of cries, groans, and laughter, interpreted as the signs of the power of the Holy Spirit. A few embraced perfectionist views and others preached "divine healing."[2]

Fredrik Franson was a convert to the Baptist faith; later he became a follower of Moody, whose church he joined. After strenuous activity as evangelist, he became a missionary to the Mormons in Utah.[3] By 1881 he set forth as an expositor of prophetic subjects, notably the second coming of Christ. In 1881 he arranged the first "prophetic conference" in Chicago,[4] which was to be followed by similar meetings in many places both in America and in Europe and especially in Sweden.[5] From the fall of 1881 he traveled and preached for nearly a decade in most of the European

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Princell's descriptive statement refers to the "Free-free" and to a certain element within the Free Mission Friends. Historically it has no application to the Mission Friends of the Mission Covenant. Their conservative stand kept the independents or Free Mission Friends and the "Free-free" out of the Covenant. See Brolund, Missionsvännernas historia, pp. 105-07, 112-15.

[1] Minneskrift, utgiven med anledning af Svenska Evangeliska Frikyrkans i Amerika Trettiofemårsjubileum i Rockford, Illinois, 10-14 Juni, 1914. 1884-1914 (Minneapolis: Larson Printing Company), p. 22.

[2] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

[3] Adolph Thomander, Fredrik Franson. En livsskildring (Uppsala: J. A. Lindblads Förlag), pp. 7-28.

[4] Ibid., pp. 28-33.

[5] Ibid., pp. 33-44.

countries, in Asia Minor and in Palestine.[1] Convinced of the imminent return of Christ, Franson became imbued with the missionary spirit and organized the China Missionary Alliance while visiting Germany. Upon his return to America, he founded the Scandinavian Missionary Alliance; through these organizations as well as under the auspices of the Christian and Missionary Alliacne, this indefatigable preacher recruited great numbers of missionaries for China.[2] In Sweden he founded a branch of the Christian Missionary Alliance; he also gave impetus to the founding of the Helgelseförbundet. The opposition he experienced by the Swedish state church and from many quarters in America only served to increase his popularity.[3] His influence was far reaching in all the non-liturgical groups of Swedish Christians, but especially among the independent groups.[4] While Princell was an enthusiast only in the revived study of the second coming of Christ, Franson was an enthusiast not only for this doctrine, but for prophecy in general, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and the great missionary commission. And in all his ministry there was something of the "Whitefield" zeal and sensationalism. Martinson gave him his wholehearted support by publicizing meetings, discussions and sermons in the Chicago-Bladet. In the midst of this new religious excitement and agitation, E. August Skogsbergh served as a mediat-

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[1] Ibid., pp. 45-85.

[2] T. C. Bach, "The Founder of the Scandinavian Alliance Mission, Fredrik Franson," The Missionary Broadcaster (Chicago: The Scandinavian Alliance Mission, 1937), Vol. XIII, July, August, September. See also Gustaf Edwards, "Characteristics in the Life of Fredrik Franson We Should Call to Remembrance," Missionary Broadcaster (Chicago: Scandinavian Alliance Mission, 1941), Vol. XVII, July, August, September.

[3] In view of the Swedish law of 1858 forbidding meetings that might foment schism or provoke disrespect for public worship, consistories and church councils generally prohibited Franson from speaking at public meetings. Once when the leader of the meeting asked Franson to lead in a closing prayer, Franson was fined fifty crowns. Often he had to be protected from the mob by the police. At one occasion, he produced his American citizenship papers and said: "If anyone causes me injury, he will have to reckon with fifty million American citizens who are behind this paper." Chicago-Bladet, April 4, August 29, November 7 and December 11, 1882. Ekman in his Inre missionens historia, pp. 844-52, gives a sympathetic account of Franson's activities in Sweden.

[4] Stephenson, Religious Aspects. . . . ., pp. 125-26.

ing, quieting, and pacifying influence. Nevertheless, the influence from these left wing and radical streams of religious thought set forces in motion that gradually widened the distance between the "free" and the more conservative elements of the Mission Friends. The effect was evidenced especially after the founding of the Covenant.

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CHAPTER XII

THE FOUNDING OF THE COVENANT

The Tabernacle Covenant Church of Chicago initiated the movement which ultimately led to the founding of the Mission Covenant. Preliminary discussions had been held during the fall of 1884 by members of the Tabernacle church board "who looked with dismay upon the divisions among the Christians."[1] These men brought their observations to the official board which concurred in the expressed desire that a merger of all Mission Friend churches be attempted. By action of the church board, the proposal was brought before the regular congregational business meeting.[2] This

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[1] A. L. Skoog and A. A. Swensén in a signed article in the Missions-Vännen, a religious and political periodical published by the Mission Synod in 1874 and later sold to a publishing company, September 15, 1889, describe the events leading up to the founding of the Covenant. The above article was written in answer to a charge made in the Chicago-Bladet that the Covenant had been organized "through cunning and with the purpose of destroying an already planned association which the leaders within the Mission Synod feared that they would not get under their control." Chicago-Bladet, a religious and political publication established by the independent Swedish dissenters in 1877, charged Björk and other leaders within the Mission Covenant of "power politics." Refuting this charge, Skoog and Swensén reveal that it was the leaders within the Tabernacle, an independent congregation which had left the Mission Synod, that took the initiative. The most prominent leaders in the Tabernacle at this time were J. P. Eagle, Skoog and Swensén. Mr. Eagle was chairman of the church, superintendent of Sunday school and deacon. Mr. Skoog was a trustee and secretary of the church, as well as assistant Sunday school superintendent and choir director. Mr. Swensén was deacon and superintendent of all charities within the church. These three and possibly others within the board were the men who held the preliminary discussions. It is of interest to note that the congregation at this time was without a regular pastor; Rev. F. M. Johnson, who was later to play an important role in the organizational meeting, was called to the pastorate on November 27, 1884, while the congregation had given its authorization to call a meeting for the purpose of effecting an association among the churches on November 3, 1884. See Protokollbok för Svenska Missions-Tabernakel Församlingen av Chicago, Illinois, pp. 86-88.

[2] See Protokollbok för Svenska Missions-Tabernakel Församlingen, November 3, 1884.

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meeting took favorable action and authorized the church board to call a meeting to consider the possibility of union of the churches of the Swedish Mission Friends. Its decision read:

> The question was raised whether the congregation desired to have a large mission and ministerial meeting with the purpose of effecting an association among Christian churches. It was decided to notify by mail pastors over the entire country of this and to ascertain their opinion about the purpose of the meeting as well as the best time for it.[1]

The official church board thereupon met in special session. C. A. Björk, chairman of the Mission Synod, was present by invitation. He also brought C. V. Julin, the chairman of his church. Also present was Rev. F. M. Johnson who had arrived that same day to assume the pastorate of the Tabernacle Church. Johnson had been a member of the Ansgar Synod and, in a way, represented the viewpoint of that organization. The Tabernacle church through its board represented the independents. Björk is said to have "manifested astonishment at the proposal and expressed his surprise in an almost reproachful tone" that the Tabernacle church, which had but recently withdrawn from the Mission Synod, would take the initiative in the merger proposal.[2] Finally, however, Björk was won over to the viewpoint of the board and it was decided to send a circular letter of inquiry to the Mission Friend pastors and leaders asking their opinion with regard to an organizational meeting. Pastors Björk and Johnson were delegated to send these letters; in case of a preponderantly favorable reply, they were authorized to extend the invitation to the meeting.[3]

The circular letter in general was received favorably by the pastors. It received the endorsement of the members of the Mission Synod central board in session at Randolph, Kansas, December 4-8, 1884. That board also decided to meet in advance of the organizational meeting and to notify the Ansgar Synod board through

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Skoog and Swensén in Missions-Vännen, September 15, 1889.

[3] Ibid. See also Axel Mellander, "Nå hur var det?" Missions-Vännen, August 14, 1889. "It has been told me," says Mellander, "that only after considerable hesitation Björk accepted the commission to share in extending the invitation to the meeting." Cf. Mellander, "Ännu några ord," Missions-Vännen, August 28, 1889; also "Hvem har rätt?" Missions-Vännen, September 15, 1889.

its chairman.[1] Acting upon this sympathetic response, an invitation signed by Björk and Johnson was extended. It read as follows:

> It is herewith publicized that the meeting already proposed for merger and coöperation between the Mission and Ansgar Synods and the independent congregations commences, God willing, with a public service in the Mission Tabernacle on the south side and the Mission Church on the north side of Chicago, Illinois, Wednesday, February 18, 1885 at 7:30. As this meeting is of great importance and significance for the future work of missions in this country, we hereby urge pastors within both synods, as well as appointed delegates from independent congregations who desire to join such a constituted work to be present in a body and to share in a brotherly way in the deliberations which occur in both of the Mission churches on the south and north sides of Chicago. Meetings for edifications are held simultaneously in both churches. Brethren who plan to remain over the conference will kindly notify in time any one of the undersigned.[2]

This invitation, which appeared in several issues of the Missions-Vännen, caused something of a sensation in many quarters. The Chicago-Bladet immediately began to discuss the implications of the proposed meeting and charged that it was motivated by a desire for more power by some of the leaders. Under the title "The question of merger of Christian churches for co-operative work," Princell wrote a series of articles in the Chicago-Bladet in which he treated the meaning of sects and parties and proceeded to cite the organization which had been formed during the years among the Swedish immigrants in America.[3] He charged that these

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[1] Protokollbok för den Sw. Ev. Luth. Missions Synoden. These are the original minutes of the Mission Synod. They are extant in two volumes and will be referred to as Missions Synodens Protokoll. See II, 51-52.

[2] See the issues of Missions-Vännen during January and February, 1885.

[3] The first of these articles dealt with the Covenant in Sweden, whose organizational plan he accepted in the main, and which embodied the following points: (1) no centralized board or authority for the congregations; (2) no encroachment on the rights and responsibilities of the church, either in doctrine, faith, discipline and work, or calling, ordaining and sending out of pastors to the churches, for this the churches themselves ought to do; (3) free and direct counsel and co-operation of the churches and mutual support of one another; (4) the exercise of a most careful concern by churches for the moral standards and loyalties of the pastor. In the second part of his statement, Princell, in a penetrating analysis, treated of the organizations which already had been established and failed because they had no Scriptural

organizations came into being because of the desire for power on the part of certain individuals, and not because there was a need for authority among the churches. While this may not be openly stated, the agitation for a new organization is, nevertheless, he claimed, a desire to control schools, missions, preachers, and press. He contended that history and experience teach that the diminution of spiritual power in the individual and in the church is an invariable sign that man has tried to substitute organizations, rules, and order for true spirituality. Having traced the origins and inherent weaknesses of the three previous organizations, Princell concluded that all of them failed to reach the people because they were founded for selfish purposes, self-aggrandizement and power. According to him, the merging of the Mission and Ansgar Synods would merely mean a new party and a new schism. The coöperation of churches should be attained because of the inner spiritual unity in Christ already existing between Christians, and not because of an external authority which is foreign to New Testament teaching.[1]

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precedent. Thus, for example, the weight and aim of the first ecumenical meeting in Jerusalem was realized in the truths which had been enunciated in answer to a specific request. The Evangelical Lutheran Mission, the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod, and the Ansgar Synod had failed to accomplish anything because they were perpetuated as man-made organizations. See the issues of Chicago-Bladet during January and February, 1885. Also, Josephine Princell, J. G. Princells Levnadsminnen. På uppmaning av svenska evangeliska frikyrkan samlade och utgivna (Chicago: J. V. Martinsons tryckeri, 1916), pp. 133-48.

[1] Princell pointed out that the New Testament encourages helpfulness and benevolence, that much is said of conduct and faith for the individual and the church, and that meetings for counsel and edification are spoken of, but without reference to the necessity of formal organization. Moreover, he challenged the argument that a united organization was necessary and in harmony with the New Testament teaching for the carrying on of missions at home and abroad, the supporting of schools, the fostering of unity and peace, discipline in the churches, the guarding against parties and partisans, and the combating of heresies and injurious influences. This program is unknown to the New Testament, he said, but it is given to the Holy Spirit to order, rule, and lead, and this takes place when independence, freedom, love, and brotherliness have complete control in the church. See Chicago-Bladet, January and February, 1885; also Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 133-48.

As announced, the conference opened with a devotional service in the Tabernacle on Wednesday evening, February 18.[1] F. M. Johnson spoke inspiringly on the text, "I am a companion of all that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."[2] It was a powerful presentation of the need for Christian unity and furnished the keynote of the conference. It is said to have made a deep impression on the audience, expressing their own hope and desire for an organized and visible union and fellowship with all true Christians. Johnson was followed by C. A. Björk, who stressed the spiritual unity and oneness of believers in Christ. On the basis of this already existing internal unity, he pleaded for an external and visible unity of all the groups represented in the conference. S. W. Sundberg, a third speaker, dwelt upon the word "Covenant" as used in Psalm 89: 3, suggesting it as a biblical name for harmony and unity. He expressed a fervent hope that the conference might be instrumental in allaying the quarrel and strife between brethren and in healing all previously inflicted wounds by means of brotherly love.[3] "This preliminary service," says Bowman, "was never to be forgotten by those who had the privilege of being present."[4]

The business meeting convened the following morning, February 19. About fifty delegates were present, but later arrivals brought the number up to sixty-two.[5] Björk and Sundberg were chosen chairman and vice chairman respectively. Four secretaries were elected: E. G. Hjerpe, A. Mellander, C. M. Youngquist, and

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[1]The initial evening service was held only at the Tabernacle.

[2]Psalm 119: 63.

[3]Hjalmar Sundquist, "The Mission Covenanters. An Outline of History," Covenant Memories, 1885-1935. Golden Jubilee (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1935), pp. 71, 73.

[4]Bowman, The Mission Covenant (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1925), p. 142. For the entire organizational meeting, see C.M. Youngquist, Hem-Missionären, Kristlig tidskrift för ungdomen, hemmet och församlingen. Utgiven av Svenska Evangeliska Missionsföreningen i Nebraska, Omaha. It was published from April, 1892 to December, 1893. See the issue for October, 1893.

[5]The list of delegates was as follows: E. A. Skogsbergh, Minneapolis, Minnesota; C. W. Boquist, Red Wing, Minnesota; C. M. Youngquist, Essex, Iowa; E. G. Hjerpe, Galesburg, Illinois; A. G. Larson, Bishop Hill, Illinois; C. J. Nyvall, Sweden; J. P. Lindell,

Nels Peterson. Committees on arrangements, credentials and program were elected.[1]

J. G. Princell was present at the meeting and, through Skogsbergh, requested membership in the meeting, although he was neither a member of any synod nor delegated by any church. His request brought a heated discussion; he was asked if he was the author of the series of articles which had appeared anonymously in Chicago-Bladet in opposition to the objectives of the meeting.

Whitehall, Michigan; J. W. Carlson, Stillwater, Minnesota; K. Erixon, Moline, Illinois; S. W. Sundberg, Jamestown, New York; N. Peterson, Lindsborg, Kansas; F. Edquist, McKeesport, Pennsylvania; John E. Johnson, Chicago, Illinois; E. O. Staaf, Lindsborg, Kansas; Th. Norlin, Joliet, Illinois; G. Gustafson, Ridgeway, Pennsylvania; J. Wenstrand, Chicago, Illinois; A. Larson, Ottowa, Kansas; J. Gustafson, DeKalb, Illinois; C. A. Berggren, Coin, Iowa; C. H. Lundin, Lincoln County, S. Dakota; L. Larson, Odebolt, Iowa; Emanuel Berg, Des Moines, Iowa; F. O. Hultman, Sioux City, Iowa; J. G. Christenson, Chicago, Illinois; Constantin Olson, Brantford, Kansas; C. P. Mellgren, Osage City, Kansas; P. Peterson, Brooklyn, New York; John Peterson, Oakland, Nebraska; C. J. Edoff, Mead, Nebraska; J. P. Grubb, Holmes City, Minnesota; A. A. Magnuson, Princeton, Illinois; A. E. Wenstrand, Paxton, Illinois; D. Magnus, Ludington, Michigan; A. P. Zakrison, Lake Station, Indiana; C. A. Björk, Chicago, Illinois; C. R. Carlson, Lindsborg, Kansas; A. R. Nelson, Chicago, Illinois; And. Croonholm, Chicago, Illinois; John Hedström, Chicago, Illinois; A. Skoog, St. Paul, Minnesota; J. P. Heggen, Des Moines, Iowa; John Ferm, Lindsborg, Kansas; Edward Johnson, Chicago, Illinois; J. P. Melin, Lake, Indiana; H. Palmblad, Chicago, Illinois; S. Youngquist, Chicago, Illinois; A. Swensén, Chicago, Illinois; J. P. Eagle, Chicago, Illinois; G. Norsen, Wahoo, Nebraska; A. Hallner, Swedeburg, Nebraska; J. A. Hultman, Omaha, Nebraska; A. G. Nelson, Worcester, Massachusetts; A. Mellander, North Easton, Massachusetts; John Hagström, Boston, Massachusetts; S. Lundin, McPherson, Kansas; John Thompson, Gibson, Illinois; O. Peterson, Chicago, Illinois; George Wiberg, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Nils Sundeen, Chicago, Illinois; F. M. Johnson, Chicago, Illinois; C. Anderson, Chicago, Illinois.

[1]Members on committee on arrangements: F. M. Johnson, C. Anderson, S. Youngquist, H. Palmblad, and J. P. Eagle. Members on committee on credentials: A. Larson, E. A. Skogsbergh, and A. A. Magnuson. Members on program committee: J. Peterson, C. J. Nyvall, C. R. Carlson, S. W. Sundberg, and Th. Norlin.

I have had access to and read the minutes as they appear in the original form in Svenska Evangeliska Missionsförbundets Protokollbok, 1885-1890. For the sake of expediency I will use the printed volume of these minutes entitled Protokollen från Årsmötena, 1885-1890. Missionsförbundets första femårsperiod. Edited by C. V. Bowman. This will hereafter be cited, Bowman (ed.) Protokollen. Both the original minutes and the printed edition are in the Covenant Archives.

Moreover, he was charged both with using opprobrious epithets in connection with the articles and with advising the churches not to participate in the conference. Princell readily acknowledged his authorship, but denied that he was opposed to every kind of organization or coöperative plan. He freely acknowledge that the wording of the invitation did not make him eligible for membership, but professed the hope that the Christian spirit of the meeting might extend beyond the letter of the announcement. Since that spirit had already been manifested through various actions during the meeting, he had hoped for the privilege of becoming a member. After considerable discussion, Princell was, nevertheless, denied the privilege of the floor.[1] Several, however, protested his exclusion and urged that a second vote be taken. In a second vote, the first decision was affirmed but with a smaller majority.[2] Princell, then, asked for and was given the permission to address the meeting briefly. He reiterated that he had come with the hope that possibly he would be extended a brotherly hand. The initial sermon had inspired such a hope, he said. While he did not question their right to exclude him, he said:

> In the future do not say, 'We want to unite with everyone who fears God,' but if you say anything, tell the truth and say, 'We wish to unite only with those we know have sanctioned beforehand a formal union of congregations. We suspected one brother of not being in favor of this and although he desired to share in the union and co-operation of the Christians on a biblical ground, still we did not wish him. . . .even to have a voice in the meeting.'[3]

Thereupon Princell left the meeting followed by several pastors.[4]

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[1] Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 154-56. The vote was six in favor of and eighteen against giving Princell membership.

[2] The second vote resulted in eleven favoring membership for Princell and seventeen against the proposal. Ibid., cf. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 143-44.

[3] Chicago-Bladet, March 3 and 10, 1885, gives the detailed story of the organizational meeting and of the Princell episode. See also Princell, Levnadsteckning, pp. 154-56. It seems clear that Princell was against synods and denominations, but he appears to have been much in favor of co-operation between the churches. In historical perspective, it seems strange that the meeting did not fully ascertain what Princell really believed before arbitrarily excluding their greatest champion for religious freedom and co-operation--the ideal for which the Läsare had fought in Sweden and, in many instances, in the Lutheran churches of the Augustana Synod.

[4] Pastors K. Erixon, A. L. Anderson, Nordin, Thorell, Davis, and Sahlström left the meeting with Princell.

A committee of five was appointed to speak with him and, if possible, persuade him to recant publicly or at least modify his statements in the Chicago-Bladet. He was reminded that he would not be given membership in the conference until he had publicly retracted his "unchristian epithets." Princell, however, asserted that he had written in a Christian spirit and refused to retract or modify his opinion.[1]

The following statement by an eye witness who writes after a lapse of sixty years is illuminating:

> From the very start one could sense that the atmosphere was charged with explosives. The discussion preparatory to the conference had been violent, and the opinions clashed and voices thundered during the sessions. Many feared that the opposition would win. But the wise and calm chairman guided the debate to an affirmative decision.[2]

After the Princell episode, the conference proceeded with its principal business, introduced by a discussion over the question, "Is it right or wrong for Christian churches and societies to unite in work for the kingdom of God, and on what basis can such a union be accomplished?" The result of the discussion was presented in the form of a resolution, unanimously approved and adopted. The resolution affirmed the wisdom of uniting: (1) because the New Testament alludes in numerous places to such practice, (2) it lies in the very nature of Christian life and fellowship, (3) experience has shown that it is serviceable and useful. As to the basis for such a union it was asserted that any Christian unity must be founded on the Word of God, and must "be a union of true believers only, composed of men and women spiritually alive and desirous of brotherly peace, unity, and fellowship."[3]

The following day, Friday, February 20, the meeting discussed the question: "How can we in a Christian and practical

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[1]This committee met with Princell on Tuesday, five days after Princell's exclusion. Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 156-57.

[2]Andrew Johnson, "The Birth of the Covenant," The Covenant Weekly, February 16, 1945. Rev. Johnson is one of the Covenant pioneer pastors who was present but not as a delegate. See also Constantin Olson, "När Missionsförbundet bildades," The Covenant Weekly, February 19, 1935, and Svante Lundeen, "When the Covenant Was Organized Fifty Years Ago," The Covenant Weekly, February 19, 1935. Both Olson and Lundeen were delegates to the meeting.

[3]Bowman (ed.) Protokollen.

way effect a brotherly union between our believing countrymen in America for the propagation of the gospel and the furtherance of a Christian church polity?" The discussion failed to crystallize into a clearly defined plan. Instead a committee of seven was appointed to formulate a tentative constitutional basis for the merger.[1] Moreover, the conference decided to vote on the question of union. When the motion was brought to a vote, only two or three voted in the negative. Spontaneously the assembly rose and united in singing Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," whereupon the chairman invoked God's blessing on the new organization. The secretary of the conference records it as a solemn and unforgettable moment.[2] E. August Skogsberg, one of the leading personalities at the organizational meeting, published the following report of the meeting in Den Kristna Härolden. Wrote he:

> February 20, 1885, is a day that will not soon be forgotten by the brethren who were present at the meeting. It is probably the most important day in the history of the Swedish Mission work in America. . . . .That all wanted a union had been proven the day before, but the means of effecting such an organization was the Gordian knot that had to be loosed. Many did not want to see the Mission Synod dissolved. Others hoped that all former organizations would be dissolved and a new beginning made on a new foundation. . . . .If the latter faction had held to its idea that the synods must be dissolved, and a new association be built, it is doubtful that the efforts to form the Covenant would have succeeded. Many asked for the floor. The discussion was very lively. One read in the features of almost every one present the uncertainty of the result; yet somehow, it seemed that everyone was anxious that the goal be reached. For a long time everybody spoke as if to sort of feel the pulse of the other fellow.
>
> Finally it became apparent more and more that the dissolution of the Mission Synod at the present time was neither wise nor timely, since one speaker after another said that if they could not join the new organization in a body they would not consider it at all. Now a turn came in the discussion. All spoke in the same vein. They would rather see a tearing down of the old for the purpose of building something new, yet they would be willing to work for a union of churches just as they were organized at present without judging the views held by various members.
>
> This fine spirit of Christian brotherliness began to burn

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[1] The members of the committee were: Th. Norlin, A. Hallner, A. Larson, S. W. Sundberg, C. R. Carlson, J. P. Eagle, and C. J. Nyvall. Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 9. Cf. Sundberg, "An Outline of History," Covenant Memories, pp. 74-75.

more and more in the hearts of the brethren, until the meeting became so warm, that prayers and wishes in that direction were heard all over, and one could read the zeal and earnestness in the faces of everyone present. Doubts had vanished, and it remained only to make formal announcement that the spirit of brotherliness had triumphed in the meeting. A motion was made that all in favor of a union should stand on their feet, and as far as I was able to determine, there was not one of the members of the meeting, but that he stood up.

Not only members of the meeting but also outsiders who attended stood up in joy and happiness. While we were standing a brother led us in prayer after which the whole congregation enthusiastically joined in the singing of Luther's mighty hymn, 'A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

It is impossible to portray the feeling of the meeting. One stood there as if amazed at what had happened. But soon there were brotherly embraces and friendly discussions within small groups. Brethren confessed that they had been like so many goats which had tried to budge each other but had now lost their horns and could now love their brethren whom they had differed with before. It was inspiring to listen to these confessions.[1]

The next day the constitution was adopted. It read as follows:

I

Name

The name of this society shall be the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant of America.

II

Confession

The Covenant accepts the Word of God, the Holy Books of the Old and the New Testament, as the only perfect rule for faith, creed, and conduct.

III

Object

The object of this Covenant is to work for the propagation of the Gospel of Christ and the development of Christian life and co-operation of the individual churches in harmony with the teaching and example of Christ and His Apostles.

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[1] E. August Skogsberg, "When the Covenant Was Born," Skogsberg's Report in Den Kristna Härolden. It was re-published in English in Veckobladet, December 18, 1834 as well as in the Covenant Weekly, February 19, 1935. For similar reminiscences from this meeting, see Olson, op. cit., and Lundeen, op. cit.

IV

Membership

The Covenant is a union of Christian churches and societies, whether such societies are composed of churches or individual Christians.

The churches and societies which are composed of believing members and want to unite with the Covenant shall apply for membership to the secretary of the Covenant and give the names of the members of the Board. The next conference of the Covenant will act on such applications.

Every church or society united with the Covenant has a right to send two delegates to the conference of the Covenant to represent the organization.

V

Executive Committee

At the annual conference of the Covenant the delegates shall elect an executive committee of seven members; a chairman, a vice chairman, a secretary, a vice secretary, and three trustees of whom one shall act as treasurer. Also two auditors shall be elected who shall audit the accounts of the Covenant and examine the acts of the executive committee. The trustees shall be so elected that one retires and is replaced each year.

VI

Meetings

The Covenant's affairs are managed by the churches and societies through credited delegates who shall assemble once a year in a general conference at a time and place that is decided annually.

VII

Ministers and Recommendations

The ministers that shall be sent out by the Covenant shall have the endorsement and recommendation of the Covenant.

VIII

Changes and Additions

Proposed changes and additions to these By-Laws shall be introduced at an annual conference, but can not be decided upon before the next annual meeting.[1]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 9-11. In the main I have followed the translation as given by Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 145-46. It

On Monday, at the fifth session of the conference, a central board was elected. It was composed of the following members: Chairman, C. A. Björk; Vice Chairman, A. Larson; Secretary, Axel Mellander; Assistant Secretary, A. Hallner; Trustees: Sven Youngquist, C. R. Carlson, and J. O. Heggen.[1] The following day, several items of interest were decided. The central board was to call itinerant preachers to travel over the field when necessary; Dr. P. P. Waldenström of Sweden was extended an invitation to visit the Mission Covenant of America at his earliest convenience; a committee was appointed to draft articles of incorporation; the central board was authorized to receive congregations that apply for membership; and lastly, a committee of three was appointed to investigate the possibilities of affiliating any future educational endeavors with the Congregationalists. Since the overture made by the latter was received favorably by the conference and became a determining force of far reaching consequences for the future of the newly launched Mission Covenant, a further word of explanation is necessary.[2]

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is of interest to note that the committee adopted, with one major change, the constitutional plan prepared by J. G. Princell and A. Larson and presented to the meeting of the Ansgar Synod at Galesburg, Illinois, April 4-10, 1884 and later at Worcester, Massachusetts. The major change occurs in the article on membership where Princell had advocated the privilege of membership for all pastors and laymen interested in the work and known as genuine Christians, in addition to one or two delegates from each Christian church that desired to be represented; in other words, a representation of individuals as over against a representation of churches and societies as voted on by the Covenant. Thus, with the exception of the article on membership and some minor changes in detail, Princell's plan, based largely on the constitutional provisions of the Mission Covenant in Sweden, became the constitution of the Swedish Mission Covenant of America. See Chicago-Bladet, March 3, 22, 1885. Cf. Princell, Levnadsminnen, pp. 157-58.

[1] Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, pp. 11-12.

[2] Ibid., pp. 12-14. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the Chicago Theological Seminary had appointed a committee consisting of Pastors F. E. Emrich and M. W. Montgomery and Professor Samuel Ives Curtiss to attend the organizational meeting of the Covenant and to bring greetings. Professor H. M. Scott was appointed to the same committee by the Chicago Ministers' Union. This committee invited C. A. Björk, E. August Skogsbergh, S. W. Sundberg, John Wenstrand, and Andrew Hallner to discuss a plan whereby a Swedish theological department could be established for the Swedish free churches in conjunction with the seminary. Missions-Vännen, February 25, 1885; also Winfred Rhoades, Frederick Ernest Emrich (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1933), pp. 27 ff.

The rapid increase in Swedish immigration during the 1880's[1] had attracted the attention of the American Congregationalists who had already extended, through the American Home Missionary Society, financial assistance to many Swedish Lutheran and Mission churches. This friendly interest on their part gained new impetus when Dr. M. W. Montgomery, partly for reasons of health and partly from a desire to study the free church movements, visited Sweden and Norway in 1884. Montgomery carried letters of introduction (one of which from E. August Skogsbergh) to influential leaders. In Sweden he visited schools, churches, and mission societies, and interviewed such leaders as Waldenström and Ekman. He reported his observations to the secretaries of the American Home Missionary Society who, in turn, published his findings in a book entitled, "A Wind from the Holy Spirit in Sweden and Norway." It was a sympathetic account of the people, customs, beliefs, and especially the great revival which had swept those countries. It included the observation that the great revival had resulted in an outburst of Congregationalism in Scandinavia. "There is little or no difference except in name and language between these congregations and ours," he wrote, closing with an appeal to his denominational leaders to support the Scandinavian immigrant converts in the New World.[2] Moreover, he suggested that Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish ministers be given financial aid by appropriations from the Home Mission Board; that a Swedish and Norwegian or Danish teacher be engaged by the Chicago Theological Seminary for instructing young men who felt called to preach the gospel among their fellow countrymen in America; that financial aid be given the mission institutes in Vinlöf and Kristinehamn, Sweden, and that mission institutes be established in Norway and Denmark. As we shall see, the denomination acted on the first two proposals.[3]

At the organizational meeting in Chicago, in February,

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[1] In the decade 1861-1870, 88,731 Swedish emigrants came to America; in the period 1871-1880, the number had increased to 101,169; and during 1881-1890, 324,285 emigrants had arrived from Sweden. See Florence Janson, op. cit., p. 500.

[2] M. W. Montgomery, A Wind from the Holy Spirit in Sweden and Norway (New York: American Home Missionary Society, 1885).

[3] Ibid., pp. 111-12; cf. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 163-65.

1885, three of the members of the Chicago Theological Seminary, H. M. Scott, S. I. Curtiss, and F. E. Emrich were introduced to the conference.[1] They carried letters addressed to Dr. Waldenström which contained a formal call by the seminary board to any competent teacher whom Waldenström should select and recommend to become instructor in a proposed Swedish department of the seminary. Moreover, they invited a committee of the Swedish pastors to discuss a plan whereby the Swedish department could be established and made available for the Covenant students.[2] The meeting afterwards appointed Björk, Wenstrand and F. M. Johnson to meet with the Congregationalist leaders and take suitable measures.[3] This joint committee met during March and April. It does not appear that Björk evinced any great enthusiasm for the pending educational question. With many others he was at heart opposed to a theological school. Their reaction to education is reflected in the following statement.

> They themselves were self-educated pastors, who had preached for many years with marked success, and this caused them to consider a school unnecessary, even detrimental in its effect on young men preparing for the ministry. Pastor C. A. Björk was one of those who opposed the suggestion of training preachers in a theological seminary. He suggested that young men, who felt the call to enter the ministry of the gospel, should become assistants to older pastors for a few weeks or months.[4]

To insure the greatest measure of success in their educational work among the Mission Friends, the Congregationalists were

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[1]Evidently they had held some preliminary talks with the above mentioned Mission Friend pastors prior to their appearance at the first business session on Thursday, February 19. In the report given under the caption "The German and Scandinavian Departments in Our Seminary," the writer speaks of the presence of the Congregational leaders as follows: "The most important sittings were attended by Mr. Emrich, Professor Curtiss and Superintendent Montgomery, and on different occasions we were invited to deliver our message on behalf of the Congregational ministers of Chicago and our own seminary." See Minutes of Tenth Triennial Convention held at Chicago, April 22, 1885 (Chicago: Chicago Theological Seminary).

[2]Missions-Vännen, February 25, 1885; also Winfred Rhoades, op. cit., cf. Bowman, The Mission Covenant, p. 165.

[3]Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, p. 14.

[4]Andrew Johnson, "The Birth of the Covenant," Covenant Weekly, February 16, 1945. Rev. Johnson was present at the organizational meeting and gives his reminiscenses in this article.

naturally anxious to have the good will and active support of Björk, the President of the new organization. To that end they cultivated his friendship. Thus we find Björk present at their Triennial Convention in Chicago in 1885 and introduced to the Convention by Prof. Curtiss.[1] After much hesitation, Björk was finally prevailed upon to travel to Sweden at Congregational expense to deliver their letter personally to Waldenström and if possible bring back the answer in the person of the selected teacher.

Björk sailed for Sweden on May 13, 1885. In his consultation with Waldenström, two men were suggested. The first candidate was either unwilling or unable to accept the position. Thereupon, the call was extended to the Reverend Fridolph Risberg, a former minister in the Swedish state church and now a pastor in the Mission Covenant of Sweden and an ardent supporter of the free church movement. Risberg accepted and arrived with Björk in Chicago, September 6, 1885. A few days later he began his academic work in the Swedish Department of the Chicago Theological Seminary.[2]

When the first annual meeting of the Covenant convened at Princeton, Illinois, September 28, 1885, Björk presented the report of the school committee. The committee, which had been authorized to "do the best it could," reported the establishment of a Swedish department as a part of the Chicago Theological Seminary and the appointment of Fridolph Risberg to the Swedish Professorship.[3] Through representatives, the faculty of the seminary also gave a lengthy report of seminary work and in conclusion answered three questions proposed by the Covenant officials. The questions were: (1) On what conditions will students be admitted to the Swedish department? (2) What is the relationship

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[1] Minutes of the Tenth Triennial Convention held at Chicago, April 22, 1885, in connection with the Chicago Theological Seminary.

[2] Fridolph Risberg, Strödda minnen från mitt flydda liv (Chicago: Missions-Vännens Bokförlag, 1916), pp. 101-14. This is Risberg's autobiographical account. See also O. C. Grauer, "The Swedish Institute of the Chicago Theological Seminary," Historical Records Regarding the Swedish Institute, 1885-1916. Chicago: Chicago Theological Seminary Archives. See also letter from O. C. Grauer to Gerhard Palmgren dealing with the Swedish Department later changed to the Swedish Institute. Scandinavian Alliance Archives, Chicago Theological Seminary.

[3] Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, pp. 24-25, 30.

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of students to the Swedish churches? (3) What is Professor Risberg's relationship to the Chicago Theological Seminary? Replying to these questions, the Congregationalists stated that the requirements for admittance to the Swedish department would be the same as for the American, that students were free to determine their own relationship to the Swedish churches, and that Professor Risberg's relationship to the seminary was the same as that of any other faculty member.[1]

Confronted with a fait accompli, the delegates elected a committee of five to present recommendations on the educational question.[2] This committee recommended the following measures: (1) the Covenant agrees to continue the school for another year; (2) the Covenant, in accordance with the suggestion by the Congregationalists, appoints a committee of three to supervise, in conjunction with the American directors, the Swedish department within the seminary; (3) the Swedish committee is to be given the responsibility of ascertaining the condition of the school and of reporting to the annual meeting of the Covenant.[3] Later in the meeting, A. Hallner expressed the appreciation of the conference to the American representatives for their interest in the school problem. Professor Curtiss and Pastor Emrich responded cordially, and the latter presented a contribution for the Castle Garden Mission in New York and promised to have tracts for this mission supplied at a cheaper rate than those prevailing.[4]

Other important business matters included appropriations to the Castle Garden Mission, the appointment of itinerant preachers to travel in the interest of the Covenant, the incorporation of the organization,[5] the admission to membership of all applicants recognized as bona fide pastors,[6] and the formal admission

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[1] Ibid., pp. 25-29.

[2] Ibid. Members on this committee were E. A. Skogsbergh, Fridolph Risberg, C. Carlson, C. A. Björk, and A. Larson.

[3] A. G. Nelson, John Wenstrand, and C. A. Björk were elected members of the school committee. Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, p. 31.

[4] Ibid., p. 32. [5] Ibid., pp. 30-40.

[6] Ibid., p. 40. The roster of conference delegates contained the names of thirty-eight pastors. The secretary, however,

of forty-seven congregations and one district society as members of the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant of America.[1] In the election of a central board, C. A. Björk was re-elected chairman.[2]

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makes the notation that this list does not represent the entire ministerial membership and urges pastors who desire to unite with the Covenant to make application to the secretary (Ed. note).

[1]The executive board had been authorized at the organizational meeting to receive qualified congregations into the membership of the Covenant. Its action was now formally ratified and the status of an additional number of churches was examined and accepted. Churches considered members at the first annual meeting were The Mission Tabernacle, Chicago, Illinois; The Ebed Melek Church, North Easton, Massachusetts; The Second Swedish Lutheran Church, Galesburg, Illinois; The Free Church, Pecatonica, Illinois; such member churches of the Mission Synod as the congregations in Lundby and Red Wing, Minnesota; Enterprise, Kansas; Marielund, Wisconsin; Salem, Kandiyohi Co., Minnesota; Sioux City, Iowa; St. Paul, Minnesota; Rockford, Illinois; Fremont, Iowa; Saron, Nebraska; Bethesda, Nebraska; Keokuk, Iowa; Phelps Center, Nebraska; Fridhem, Nebraska; Spring Garden, Minnesota; Salem, Burt Co., Nebraska; Karmel, Dodge Co., Nebraska; Muskegon, Michigan; Salina, Kansas; Stanton, Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska; Paxton, Illinois; Lafayette, Indiana; Grand Rapids, Michigan; De Kalb, Illinois; Whitehall, Michigan; Manistee, Michigan; Stockholm (Douglas Park) Chicago; Lindsborg, Kansas; Randolph, Kansas; Lost Grove (Lanyon), Iowa; Moingona, Iowa; Center City, Minnesota; Mission Church (North Side)Chicago; Princeton, Illinois; Des Moines, Iowa; Swede Bend, Iowa; Cadillac, Michigan; Duluth, Minnesota; Lockport, Illinois; Joliet, Illinois; Angus, Boone Co., Iowa; Aurora, Nebraska; and the Northwestern District Society. At this meeting the Mission Synod in a communication from Rev. Andrew E. Wenstrand, its chairman, requested membership for the synod in the Mission Covenant. Official action had been taken at the annual meeting in Des Moines, Iowa, 1885. The letter from Wenstrand to the Mission Covenant is dated August 14, 1885. It is deposited in the Covenant Archives. In a letter of response, the Mission Covenant through its chairman and secretary informed the central board of the Mission Synod that "in accordance with its request, the Mission Synod was accepted" into membership of the Covenant and that such churches of the synod as had made a written request were likewise accepted into full membership. The acceptance of the synod as a whole did not automatically confer membership on the member churches of the synod. Björk and Hallner, however, urged the Mission Synod to secure information with regard to the remaining congregations. See Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, p. 20. Cf. Letter to Mission Synod under signature of C. A. Björk and A. Hallner, dated November 17, 1885. Covenant Archives.

[2]Other members of the executive board were S. W. Sundberg, vice chairman; A. Hallner, secretary; A. Mellander, vice chairman; S. Youngquist, J. O. Heggen, and C. R. Carlson, trustees.

CHAPTER XIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have noted that the first mission societies and mission churches emerged from a variety of causes. In some instances dissatisfaction with the spiritual condition of the mother church was the cause;[1] in others it was disagreement in polity, impatience with the ritual, ceremonies, and order of worship, and the opportunity America gave for the assertion of religious freedom.[2] After 1872 the controversy over the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement gave rise to some defection in the Augustana churches[3] and for more than a decade greatly accelerated the movement. And in all of the early sesessions, the principle of a converted church membership occupied a more or less prominent place and often became a determinant factor, for the dissenter groups could not condone the prevalent practice of church membership irrespective of an individual conversion experience.[4] It was the very old controversy which had its counterpart in Presbyterian and Congregational cleavage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[5] The greater number of churches, however, were organized not as a result of schism from the Augustana churches but in consequence of the great revivals and personal soul winning among the unchurched or among those who had gotten out of touch with all organized religion.[6] The entire movement gained tremendously from the influx of the hyper-evangelicals from Sweden who had shared in the great revivals in the fatherland; converts of Dwight L. Moody and E. August Skogsbergh also swelled the membership.

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[1] The Swede Bend church is a typical example.

[2] See the schism in the Galesburg church on this question.

[3] The Lindsborg, Kansas, and the Gustavus Adolphus church, New York, might be cited as historic instances.

[4] See the story of the North Side Mission Church, Chicago.

[5] William Warren Sweet, Religion in Colonial America (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), pp. 73-76.

[6] The Tabernacle Covenant Church, Chicago is typical.

The new organization from the outset met with much antagonism. A flood of articles especially in the Chicago-Bladet, often vitriolic, issued challenges and charges, with occasional explanations and demands for retractions in the Missions-Vännen, kept the controversy alive, doing great mischief and injuring a good cause. The exclusion of Princell from the organizational meeting provided material for much controversy, drove a wedge between groups of identical racial and spiritual heritage, and gave momentum to a left wing movement that looked to Princell and Martinson for leadership. The excesses created by the preaching of some hyper-antinomians widened the distance between the "Frees" and the conservative Covenanters. The eastern field became more and more indebted to the Congregationalists; and the Scandinavian Alliance in no small measure divided the loyalties with them.[1] Still, in spite of its inability to gather all Swedish Lutheran dissenters within the frame-work of the new organization, the Covenant, nevertheless, achieved far beyond the fondest hopes of the founders. It has enjoyed a steady and healthy growth as evidenced by the fact that it now ministers through nearly 500 churches to an aggregate adult membership of almost 50,000. It has been asserted, though it may be slightly exaggerated, that the Covenant directly and indirectly touches close to 200,000 individuals.

A. Creedal Position

The organizational meeting adopted no formal creed; not even the Augsburg Confession. It merely declared the acceptance of "the Word of God, the Holy Books of the Old and New Testaments, as the only perfect rule for faith, creed, and conduct." Nor has any meeting since ventured to set forth any creed or statement of doctrine other than the Bible itself. A spiritual experience and Christian character have always been the only tests of church fellowship, and while the interpretation of the teachings of the

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[1] In a great number of instances the church properties of the eastern field in full or in part belong to the Congregationalists. The congregations are generally served by Covenant men, while the missionary work they support is almost exclusively that of the Scandinavian Alliance. The churches also generally are affiliated with and support the Eastern Missionary Association, a conference that is affiliated with the Mission Covenant.

Bible held by the members and the ministry is generally in accord with that of most evangelicals, no follower of Christ is barred from membership because of difference in theological belief. Nevertheless, the Covenant identifies itself historically and doctrinally with the Lutheran church. In spite of the Waldenströmian theory of the atonement, it does not lay claim to a new doctrine but merely asserts the rediscovery of forgotten New Testament truths. It recognizes its indebtedness to the great historic faiths and to all reviving and recreating influences from both Lutheran and Reformed churches. The unwritten doctrinal position of the founding fathers has been succintly expressed by Rev. Theodore W. Anderson, President of the Mission Covenant, in the following clauses characterizing Covenant principles: the supremacy of the Bible, the necessity of spiritual life, belief in the unity of all true Christians, the independence of the local church, and the urgency of the missionary task.[1] These basic principles have remained intact during the lapse of years and continue to constitute the foundation upon which the Covenant builds its work. Doctrinally, however, it considers itself Lutheran and together with that historic faith defines the church as the "communion of saints" in which the Word of God is taught in its purity and the sacraments are administered in accordance with the institution of Christ.[2] The communion of saints is the center of Covenant ecclesiology. This implies a life relationship between Christ and the believers, but it also implies a similar relationship between the believers themselves. The Christian does not stand in isolation but in communion and union with Christ, the members of the Triumphant Church, and his fellow believers. It is a personal relationship. The expression "communion of saints" does not, however imply that the visible church consists only of believers, since it is practically impossible to prevent hypocrites and unbelievers from coming into the membership of the church. The aim, nevertheless, is to have a "pure" church, a membership of true believers who can testify to a personal conversion experience. Doctrinally,

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[1] Theodore W. Anderson, "Covenant Principles," Covenant Memories, pp. 7-15.

[2] "Augsburg Confession," Concordia Triglotta, Article VII, p. 47; cf. Billings, Kristna Kyrkans Bekännelser.

the process is justification by faith. The Covenant in general accepts the Lutheran position on the Lord's Supper and Baptism, though freedom of conscience and interpretation are accorded both the ministry and the membership. As a result there has been a marked tendency during the last two decades to embrace Reformed views regarding the sacrament. Without dogmatism the Covenant believes that it emulates the New Testament teaching and marks a return to early and biblical teaching.

B. Polity

In polity the Covenant represents a compromise between Congregationalism and Presbyterianism. The local church affiliated with the Covenant is a local unit and may send from one to three delegates to the annual conference.[1] The Covenant field has been divided into convenient areas or district associations or conferences and these district associations may send two delegates each to the annual meeting. Churches not affiliated with the Covenant but contributing to its missions and institutions may send one delegate each. But only members in good standing of a church regularly affiliated with the Covenant or with a district association affiliated with the Covenant are eligible for election to an office or membership in an administrative board.[2]

The constitution gives no particular direction for church polity. Each congregation remains entirely autonomous and decisions made by the annual meetings are not binding upon the congregations but are generally voted upon by each local unit. Each church has its own constitution and each member has an equal vote in the affairs of the local unit and is equally subject to its control. Church membership is on the confession of faith with baptism and confirmation generally a prerequisite. Infant baptism by sprinkling is the historic position held by the Covenant, but any other mode is considered equally valid. Confirmation con-

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[1] Covenant Year Book (Chicago: Covenant Book Concern, 1944), pp. 282-83.

[2] Ibid.

sists of instruction in the Christian faith and concludes with a public examination.[1] Admittance to church membership and the Lord's Supper does not automatically follow upon confirmation as in the Lutheran Church, but becomes an individual decision. A keen sense of liberty is revealed in the absence of any provision for a set order of worship or a rigid polity that would tend to an ecclesiastical and hierarchical legalism. Covenant life expresses itself in a variety of forms. Matters of polity and organization are determined in each case by practicability and expediency and are not considered essential to the church nor in any way a part of the church. Forms are looked upon as necessary only because human conditions and human conduct demand a certain order. As such they are adiaphora. The church rests upon the solid foundation of the Word of God and this Word in the final analysis is Christ. Time-honored practice and the influence of education, however, have produced a somewhat uniform type of worship which is marked by the absence of the liturgical element.

In the beginning the ritual of the Lutheran church was used uniformly in administering the sacrament and in conducting marriages and funerals. Later a handbook was published which contained the rituals and order of services of other faiths as well. Freedom to use any or no ritual, however, is the policy of the denomination. Preachers wear no clerical vestments; they may occasionally wear a gown since the choirs quite generally are gowned. The denomination does not dictate in the calling of a minister, but some churches have enacted a constitutional provision making it obligatory to call a Covenant pastor. A spontaneous and free spirit usually prevails in the meetings; laymen are often called upon in the services to offer testimonies and prayer. The morning worship tends to become more formal than the evening meetings; the latter in many churches are evangelistic, not to say revivalistic. Finally, the denomination which began as a Swedish immigrant church group sixty years ago has developed deep roots in the American soil and has become an indigenous organization working in closest harmony with other groups of the historic faiths.

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[1] Until very recent times, Luther's Small Catechism formed an indispensable part of the Mission Covenant confirmation material. Even the last text book contains most of the Small Catechism.

C. The Ministry

Some attention was given to the ministry at the organizational meeting. Men known for their loyalty to the Scriptures, piety, spiritual maturity, and circumspect lives were to be recognized as bona fide Covenant pastors and were called to minister to the spiritual needs of the field. While they were allowed a wide latitude in their interpretation of the Scripture, they must not deviate from the teaching of the Bible nor must they become schismatics. At the first annual meeting the qualifications were reiterated and the decision reached that all acceptable pastors should be officially recognized in the Covenant ministerial roster and as such be given letters of recommendation. At the organizational meeting, the prerogative of the individual churches to ordain their own ministers was recognized and affirmed.[1] The Covenant would ordain only when specifically requested to do so; but it would issue licenses to pastors from time to time engaged in its services. Gradually, however, this prerogative was transferred to the annual meeting; today this body licenses[2] and ordains the Covenant ministers.[3] The Covenant of today stands for an educated ministry and requires a minimum of junior college and graduation from a three year seminary course in addition to one year of interneship as prerequisites for ordination. Ministers called to Covenant churches from other communions must serve five years in a Covenant church before they become officially recognized as Covenant pastors. If they lack in educational requirements, they must spend at least one year at the denominational school. The Covenant recognizes only one order in the preaching ministry.

D. Education

The early Mission Friends, it will be remembered, had few, if any, educational requirements for its ministers. Many of the

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[1] Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, pp. 12-13.

[2] The Executive Board is generally granted the right to issue licenses in emergency cases between the annual meetings.

[3] A church will often request that the ordination of its pastor be conducted in his church. Usually such a request is granted and an ordination committee appointed at the annual meeting.

leaders were opposed to a formal training of pastors. This attitude can be fully appreciated when we realize that many of these were self-educated men who had served with a marked degree of success. The "inner call" to them was far more important than any secular education. This fact made them look upon education not only as unnecessary but harmful. An educated clergyman reminded them painfully of many ministers in the Swedish state church or in the Augustana Synod who had denounced them as colporteurs from the pulpit. Pastor Björk, the first president of the Covenant, had enjoyed no formal training. His suggestion that prospective ministerial candidates secure their training by becoming assistants to older pastors for a few weeks or months was shared by a great many other Covenant preachers and laymen. Nevertheless, at the organizational meeting in 1885, the Covenant accepted the offer by the Chicago Theological Seminary of a Swedish department for the training of future Covenant ministers. The arrangement was increasingly questioned when it became clear that the Covenant had little or nothing to say in the administration of that department.

> Under these circumstances the school could not be a servant of the Mission Covenant unless the Mission Covenant would consent to subordinate itself under the American Congregational denomination which, of course, was out of the question.[1]

Within one year the leaders realized that Covenant pastors educated at the Congregational seminary would soon become instrumental in bringing Covenant churches into the Congregational fold and the Covenant would cease to exist. As a result a committee was appointed in 1886 to investigate the possibilities of starting a mission institute of their own "as the Lord would seem to lead." Simultaneously they sent a letter of thanks to the Congregationalists for their kindness and good will to the Swedish churches.[2]

The agitation for a Covenant school became more insistent with the years. In 1887 the Swedish Tabernacle in Minneapolis approved a resolution requesting the establishment of such an institution.[3] The annual meeting of that year went on record

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[1] Bowman, The Mission Covenant, pp. 166-67.

[2] Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, pp. 56, 60, 62.

[3] Svenska Tabernakelförsamlingen; Minnesskrift (Minneapolis, 1924), p. 35.

as approving the establishment of a school at some auspicious future time.[1] To meet the more immediate need, the annual meeting requested Congregational approval in the calling of an additional teacher in the Swedish department of the Chicago Theological Seminary to be salaried by the Covenant. They also asked that a Swedish committee be authorized to prepare the curriculum for the Swedish department. Both requests were granted by the Congregationalists. David Nyvall, a young scholar from Sweden, was called to the assistant professorship and served in this capacity until 1890.[2] In the meantime the demand for a denominational school became increasingly vocal, as a distinct Congregational trend due to Congregational educational influence and financial aid was noticeable especially in the Mission churches of the east, to affiliate themselves with Congregationalism. By 1891 the annual meeting voted to establish a school immediately, and on October 1, 1891, a Covenant school began its existence in the basement rooms of the Swedish Tabernacle Church in Minneapolis.[3] In the fall of 1894 the school, known as the "Skogsbergh school," was moved to Chicago and became known as North Park College and Theological Seminary. From the modest beginning of seventy-five students in 1893-1894, the enrolment has shown a remarkable increase reaching the figure 2,064 as a net total for all departments during the year 1943-1944.[4] In addition to North Park College and Seminary, another educational institution, the Minnehaha Academy and Bible Institute, has been established at Minneapolis, Minnesota.[5] Moreover, a Bible Institute is maintained in Canada.[6]

A number of Covenant publications constitute another source of education. "The Covenant Weekly, a religious-political publication, has a circulation of 12,000 copies. A Swedish weekly periodical Förbundets Veckotidning ministers to the older genera-

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[1] Carlson, A History of North Park College, pp. 101-11.

[2] Ibid. Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, pp. 93, 96, 98, 103.

[3] Svenska Tabernakelförsamlingen; Minnesskrift, p. 35.

[4] Catalog of North Park College, 1944-1945, p. 135.

[5] Covenant Year Book, 1944, p. 106.

[6] Ibid., p. 108.

tion which prefers the mother tongue. A graded series of Sunday school papers enjoy a circulation of 27,900 copies. The "Covenant Quarterly" is a publication for Covenant ministers, while a yearly publication "Our Covenant" had 3,000 copies printed in 1944. A quarterly devotional booklet, the "Home Altar," printed 17,200 copies during the last quarter of 1943. In order to facilitate the dissemination of the printed word, the Covenant in its early stages established something akin to a publishing house called the "Covenant Book Concern" which has shown an ever increasing volume of business.[1]

E. Missions

At the organizational meeting in 1885, it was decided to assume responsibility for the Castle Garden Mission, a Swedish immigrant mission in New York, formerly under the supervision of the Mission Synod. Home missionaries were also called to travel over the field in the interest of the Covenant. At the first annual meeting, the purpose of the Covenant was broadened and specifically defined in the incorporation papers, initiating immediately a more aggressive home missionary program. Thus the Princeton meeting in September of 1885, made possible the establishment of a Home of Mercy "for orphan children, destitute widows, and the sick." Such a home was established at Bowmanville in Chicago and is now used exclusively for the aged. A few years later a hospital was established as part of this benevolent institution which has enjoyed an enviable growth and reputation. During 1943 it had an average daily number of patients of 207 and a total number of 7,994 for the year. In addition the hospital operates a school of nursing which had an enrolment of 117 student nurses during 1943.[2]

In addition to the home mission work carried on directly by the Covenant through the Home for the Aged and the Hospital, the greater portion of the home missionary work is sponsored by the district associations or conferences within the Conference. As a result of a recommendation at the first annual meeting, the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 3-34, 64-66.

[2] Ibid., pp. 39-42, 60-61.

Covenant has been divided into thirteen conferences, embracing two-thirds of the states of the Union and five provinces in Canada.[1] In general these conferences define their purpose as follows: (1) unite believers on a Scriptural basis for winning others to Christ; (2) discover latent talent in a field and utilize it in Christian service; (3) aid smaller churches to secure and support a pastor; (4) reach out into unoccupied fields with the Gospel message.[2] The Central Conference adds to these basic principles two more: (1) promote Christian education and benevolences; (2) own and maintain such institutions as may be deemed necessary to carry out these purposes.[3] Accordingly, seven homes for the aged, two children's homes or orphanages, and two sailors' homes are maintained and operated under the supervision of these conferences which minister to the Covenant youth as well as to the aged and the sick.[4] Under the supervision of an efficient department of youth work, the Covenant through Sunday school associations, junior leagues, and young people's conferences carries on an aggressive and modern religious educational program for the winning of its youth. It is said to touch close to 150,000 individuals in this work in addition to its adult membership of nearly 50,000 members.

The first Covenant foreign missionary program was undertaken in 1889 when the missionary work in Alaska which had been carried on by the Covenant in Sweden was transferred to the Covenant in America.[5] That same year a decision was made to open missionary work in China and the following year Peter Matson and K. P. Wallin sailed for that country.[6] After almost insurmountable difficulties, the venture proved successful and today some

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[1] Strangely enough Canada is considered a home missionary field but Alaska is treated as a foreign mission field!

[2] Fifty Years. The Mission Association of Nebraska. 1886-1936 (Chicago: Lundquist and Foyer Printing Company, 1936), p. 7.

[3] Constitution of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church of America, pp. 1-2.

[4] Covenant Year Book, 1944, pp. 3, 109-19.

[5] Bowman (ed.) Protokollen, 1889, pp. 100-01, 117-18, 127.

[6] Ibid., p. 128; cf. p. 142.

35 missionaries in addition to a great number of native workers are engaged in that field. A number of mission hospitals and one theological seminary have been established as part of Covenant contribution to missionary work in China. During the last decade missionary work was initiated in Africa; today a Covenant staff of 21 missionaries and medical doctors labor in that field with marked success. Thus, missionary enterprises have been established on three continents and a similar project is planned in a fourth region.

An Appraisal

Does the Covenant desire to live as a separate denomination? Does its contribution to the religious life of America in the past justify its continuation and extension in the future? The answer, of course, largely depends on the viewpoint. The accomplishments during six decades would justify a continuation. Covenant institutions have made a definite contribution. The denominational school, for example, has the following as part of its objectives:

> To train students for the function of intelligent citizenship in a democracy where a sense of social responsibility and keen appreciation of moral and spiritual values are essential qualifications for leadership.[1]

And again:

> To create a dynamic Christian environment for the students in order that they may be definitely challenged to consider the Christian way of life as their basic philosophy of conduct.[2]

The school has no denominational barriers for admittance. As a result ninety per cent of the academy enrolment and fifty per cent of the college enrolment had a non-Covenant background during the last school year. The hospital shows no favoritism but renders service on a strictly non-denominational basis. By a provision in its charter, the Home of Mercy must include some non-Covenanters of other than Swedish racial background among its inmates.

It is true that the Mission Covenant has been limited by its racial background. Even today it has not touched to any great

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[1] Catalog of North Park College, 1944-1945, p. 11.

[2] Ibid.

degree a cross section of American life.[1] The present Covenant constituency is overwhelmingly of Covenant origin and only a handful of its ministers come from non-Covenant background. It can be said that the unchurched Swedish community affords the greatest field for the Mission Covenant. Moreover, the Mission Covenant is better able to attract the Swedish community, since it is by far the largest free church communion ministering to racial groups in America. On the other hand the Covenant does minister to an ever increasing number of other nationality groups which have infiltrated through intermarriage, lack of any other church in the community, or preference for the Covenant type of service. Since the linguistic and denominational barriers within the last generation have been reduced to a minimum and the Covenant stands for freedom of interpretation, an almost unlimited opportunity for service has been created. In these expanding possibilities, the Sunday schools have proved the best points of contact with other nationality groups.

Moreover, the Mission Covenant ministers to a people who still think in terms of an inner personal need, a people who would not be satisfied with a formal or institutionalized religion. Salvation is still considered an individual matter that can be attained only through a personal religious experience and not through the medium of membership in an institutionalized church. Eligibility to church membership is still, at least theoretically, on the basis of a conversion experience rather than on the testimony of desiring to become a Christian. Nor could the Mission Covenant on the basis of its guiding principle and spiritual heritage at this point unite with the great American free churches which have so largely adopted a humanistic-social point of view. Not that the Mission Covenant has entirely ignored this teaching, since many of its members have been under its influence at the great universities. Nevertheless, the social-humanistic element in its message has not been separated usually from a bibliocentric point of view. Neither has the Mission Covenant officially been a supporter of the so-called "fundamental" movements in their vari-

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[1] There are a few churches in the Covenant constituency which actually have no Swedes in their memberships. They are usually found in Canada or in the Southland and the congregations are generally very small.

ous expressions. From its inception, the Covenant assumed a conservative attitude regarding anything that flavored of the sensational. Thus, the Mission Covenant occupies a somewhat mediating position, standing between the extreme expressions of American religious life. With its non-liturgical and non-confessional position, together with a sane, Bible-centered, yet progressive program, both its past and present seem to justify its perpetuation. Though a comparatively small body, it has contributed and is still furnishing a steadying and wholesome influence upon American church life, especially upon people of Swedish background.

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